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## **EMBATTLED BORDERS**

## Books by E. ALEXANDER POWELL

### TRAVEL AND WORLD POLITICS

#### EMBATTLED BORDERS

*Eastern Europe from the Balkans to the Baltic*

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*Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and the Sahara*

#### BEYOND THE UTMOST PURPLE RIM

*Abyssinia, Somaliland, and Madagascar*

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#### THE ARMY BEHIND THE ARMY

*America at War, 1917-18*







#### THE DUCE

BENITO MUSSOLINI, LEADER OF FASCISMO, HEAD OF THE MOVEMENT, AND DICTATOR OF ITALY

Were Mussolini to die to-morrow his work would stand, he would not have lived in vain. His body would be enshrined in the Roman Pantheon but his spirit would live in the hearts of the Italian people, encouraging them, leading them on

# EMBATTLED BORDERS

EASTERN EUROPE FROM THE BALKANS  
TO THE BALTIC

BY  
E. ALEXANDER POWELL

WITH SIXTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS  
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS; AND MAPS



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TO  
J. WALDRON GILLESPIE, Esq.  
of  
"El Fuereades," Montecito, California,  
and  
"Merevale," Middle Granville, New York,  
A GREAT SCHOLAR, A WIDE TRAVELER,  
A DELIGHTFUL COMPANION, AND A  
STANCH FRIEND

227715



## FOREWORD

WERE I to be asked what sort of a book this is, I must confess that I should be at a loss for a reply, for it falls into none of the usual categories. It is not a "travel book," at least in the usual meaning of that term, for, though strung on the thread of a motor journey through regions not often explored by motorists, and interspersed with accounts of places which seemed to me of exceptional interest, it deals in the main with politics rather than peoples, with conditions rather than countries and customs. Yet students and arm-chair critics will probably refuse to take it very seriously because, with a view to enlivening what would otherwise be rather ponderous reading, I have ventured to sandwich personal experiences, picturesque incidents, amusing episodes, and "human interest" stories between discussions of weighty international problems. Personally, I have never been able to understand why the views of a writer who seeks to combine entertainment with instruction should be condemned as "superficial," for bread is bread, even though spread with jam.

What I set out to do was to write a book which would make clearer those extremely complicated



## FOREWORD

political issues which are retarding the recovery and threatening the peace of Eastern Europe, but which have been so beclouded by propaganda that the average reader has given up in despair trying to understand them. The aims of the Italian Fascists; the friction between Italy and Yugoslavia; the perennial troubles in Albania and Macedonia; the treatment of the Magyar minorities in Transylvania and Czechoslovakia; the Roumanian dynastic agitation; the proposed Austro-German union; the questions of Upper Silesia, Vilna, the Polish Corridor, and Danzig; the Polish-Lithuanian imbroglio; the relations between the Baltic States and Soviet Russia—all these are being constantly discussed in the press; they are causing deep concern to the League of Nations; on their intelligent solution depend the peace, progress, and prosperity of a large section of mankind; yet of the issues involved most Americans appear to have only a vague comprehension.

In spite of having been deluged with propaganda, bewildered by conflicting statements of fact, and pelted with contradictory opinions, I have earnestly sought to view these questions from a detached standpoint and in their true perspective. The candor with which I have discussed them will doubtless earn me far more enemies than friends, for governments, like individuals, are prone to resent even the best-intentioned criticism. Moreover, there are a large number of people who regard as heresy any

## FOREWORD

disapproval of the settlements made at Versailles or the decisions made by the League of Nations and who view an appeal that our late enemies be given a square deal as little short of treason.

The chief merit of this book, if merit it has, is that it is the result of many months spent in personal observation and painstaking investigation. It would not have been possible, I believe, to have obtained a comprehensive grasp of these highly intricate problems without visiting the countries concerned and acquainting myself with the spirit of their peoples and the views of their leaders on the spot. In order to do this I made a motor journey which occupied nearly a year and covered upward of twelve thousand miles.

In the course of this and other recent journeys through the countries under discussion I have had the privilege of talking with the rulers and political leaders of most of them, including King Victor Emmanuel of Italy, Premier Mussolini, the late King Nicholas of Montenegro, the late Premier Pashitch of Yugoslavia, the late King Ferdinand of Roumania, Queen Marie, the late Premier Bratianu, Admiral Horthy, Regent of Hungary, Premier Count Stephen Bethlen, Dr. Louis Walko, President Masaryk of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Eduard Benes, President Hainisch of Austria, President Moscicki of Poland, Marshal Pilsudski, Premier Zaleski, President Sahm of the Danzig Free State, Dr. Felix Cielens, Foreign Minister of Latvia, M. Jean Tee-

## FOREWORD

mant, Head of the State of Estonia, and M. Vaino Tanner, Prime Minister of Finland. My conversations with these national figures, all of whom expressed their views with extraordinary frankness, and with numerous other persons occupying less exalted positions—including, whenever possible, the leaders of the oppositions—plus my own observations and deductions, afforded me a graphic and up-to-the-minute picture of conditions in Eastern Europe. Nor did this picture lack a background, for I have been visiting the lands which lie between the Bosphorus and the Baltic, off and on, for nearly thirty years. Consequently, I am in a position to make comparisons. If, on the following pages, I have succeeded in giving my readers a tolerably clear idea of what is happening, or is likely to happen, in a very disturbed quarter of the world, I shall have accomplished my purpose.

E. ALEXANDER POWELL.

4 VILLA DE SÉGUR  
PARIS  
JANUARY, 1928



## AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

OF all the sins of omission, none is more unpardonable, to my way of thinking, than failure to express gratitude for kindness or assistance. This is particularly true in my own case, for it would have been almost impossible to have gathered the material for this book without the cordial coöperation of those named below, who, I trust, will accept this expression of my gratitude for their good-will, hospitality, and helpfulness.

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When it came to sketching the recent political histories of the various countries discussed in this volume I was confronted by a perplexing problem, for I found that no two authorities were agreed on anything save actual facts, and not always on them. Under these circumstances it seemed best to depend for my purely historical material upon the admirably written monographs in the thirteenth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*—"Italy," by Luigi Villari; "Hungary," by "X"; "Czechoslovakia," by President Thomas G. Masaryk; "Poland," by J. Grabowiecki; "Latvia," by Alfred Bihlmans, and "Estonia," by Edward Laaman," each of whom is a recognized authority on the recent political history of his own country. To Mr. Robert A. Curry, formerly Vienna correspondent of the "*Christian Science Monitor*," I am indebted for much valuable material on the Danubian countries. But the opinions expressed in the following pages are my own.

E. ALEXANDER POWELL.



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# EMBATTLED BORDERS



# EMBATTLED BORDERS

## CHAPTER I

### SOUTH TO THE BLUE WATER

SO ominous were the despatches appearing in the newspapers under east European date-lines, so sinister yet contradictory the rumors emanating from Belgrade, Sofia, and Bucharest, from Warsaw, Kovno, Riga, and Tallinn, that my curiosity could no longer be restrained. I determined to find out for myself what was really happening, or was likely to happen, in those remote, restless, and embattled states which stretch across Europe from the mountains of Albania to the Arctic Circle. I wished to ascertain to my own satisfaction whether the smoldering embers of racial hatred in the Balkans were being surreptitiously fanned into flame; whether the wounds left in the valley of the Danube by the treaty-makers were healing or festering; whether the shadow of the Bear hung as darkly as was reported over the Baltic borderlands—in short, whether the bulwarks so cunningly contrived and so painstakingly constructed at Versailles showed signs of weakening.

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I decided at the outset that the best facilities for travel and observation were to be had with a motor-car, in that it would enable me to go where and when I pleased without being subject to the limitations imposed by time-tables, taxicabs, and trains. Of the countries and peoples along Europe's eastern fringe I wished to obtain a closer view than was possible from the windows of a railway carriage. I planned to talk with those in power, of course—for the official point of view, though usually biased, is sometimes illuminating—and with those who hoped to come into power. But this was not sufficient. Palaces, chancelleries, and ministerial bureaus are not the best places from which to survey countries or gage the opinions of their peoples. I wished to see the Yugoslavs, the Rumanians, the Hungarians, the Czechs, the Poles, the Lithuanians, and the rest in their villages, at their work-benches, on their fields, and, so far as linguistic difficulties would permit, to talk with them. A Balkan blacksmith may know the popular mind better than a Bratianu. The opinions of a Hungarian hotel-keeper may be quite as significant as those of a Horthy. A shrewder estimate of conditions may be obtained from a Polish peasant proprietor than from a Pilsudski.

The route which I traced for myself on a map of Europe, and from which I made but few deviations, led from the English Channel across France and Italy to Rome; skirted the shores of the Adriatic; penetrated far into the Balkan peninsula; followed



## SOUTH TO THE BLUE WATER

the course of the Danube from the Iron Gates to Belgrade, Budapest, and Vienna; struck eastward across Czechoslovakia to the Carpathians; zigzagged through Silesia, Poland, and the Corridor to Danzig; traversed Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia by the old Petrograd Chaussée; and leaped across the Gulf of Finland. The journey occupied nearly eleven months and at its end the speedometer showed that we had motored something over eleven thousand miles.

It had been my original intention to purchase or hire a car in Europe, but I eventually decided to take an American car over with me and drive it myself. It must be confessed, however, that I made this decision with secret trepidation, for I doubt if there are a dozen motorists at liberty whose ignorance of a motor car's internal mechanism equals mine. It has always been a profound mystery to me why, by pouring a few gallons of gasoline into a tank, throwing over a switch, and stepping on a pedal, the wheels go round. I merely take it for granted that they will go round and let it go at that, regarding it as a phenomenon somewhat akin to that of the earth traveling around the sun. I have never adjusted a carburetor or changed a spark-plug in my life, and I hope that I shall never be called upon to do so, for there is no saying what might happen. As for such things as differentials and magnetos and transmissions, I have only the haziest idea what they look like, or where they are located, or the functions they perform. I can change tires, it is true, provided a

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

garage cannot be reached by telephone or on the rim, but it is a chore for which I have the heartiest detestation. From this it will be seen that I am not of a mechanical turn of mind.

I mention this not because I wish to boast of my inefficiency, but by way of explaining the chilliness with which my wife and daughter received the announcement of my plan.

"We will have so much more freedom in our own car," I pointed out to them. "We can start and stop when we please, and go wherever fancy dictates, and visit all sorts of interesting out-of-the-way places of which we would never get so much as a glimpse from a train."

But my wife, being the practical member of the family, failed to join in my enthusiasm.

"Don't you think it would be safer," she suggested, "to take a chauffeur along? Your utter lack of mechanical ability doesn't make so much difference over here, where you can always telephone to a garage for help in case of trouble. But what would you do if we were to break down in some country like Albania or Lithuania, where there are neither garages nor telephones, and where you couldn't make yourself understood if there were?"

"It is quite evident that you have failed to keep abreast of the advances which have been made in the automotive industry," I told her loftily. "The cars that they build nowadays are practically trouble-proof. All you have to do is to keep them

## SOUTH TO THE BLUE WATER

filled with gas, oil, and water and they will run indefinitely. The motors are sealed at the factory, you see, and require no further attention."

"Where do you get that stuff?" my daughter demanded. "It sounds to me as though you had been reading the automobile advertisements in the magazines."

"I got it at first hand," I assured her, "from a very highly informed young man who hopes to sell me a new car."

"Well," said my wife resignedly, "if you really insist on doing the driving yourself we had better take a camping outfit along, for I fully expect to spend quite a number of nights on the road."

"Some people are always taking the joy out of life," I remarked bitterly.

In rebuttal of my family's skepticism, I might mention, before proceeding with my narrative, that though we visited five-and-twenty countries, traveled thousands of miles on roads which would have tried the soul of the late John L. Macadam, and encountered every sort of difficulty, from the rock-strewn mountain passes of the Herzegovina to the bottomless sea of mud which covered the Hungarian plain, we experienced no engine trouble whatsoever, the motor never once requiring attention. We had endless tire trouble, it is true, much of it due to the method of road repairing employed in eastern Europe, which consists in covering the roads for miles on end with broken jagged stones and then leaving

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them to be crushed and rolled by the wheels of passing ox-carts and farm wagons. In many parts of the Balkans, incidentally, the oxen are shod like horses, but, their hoofs being softer, the nails drop out, to be picked up by the tires of the first motor-car that comes along. There was one memorable day when from this cause we had eleven punctures in a hundred miles.

Yet it was astonishing how quickly the simple peasants, some of whom had never seen a motor-car before, acquired the knack of changing tires under my direction. So willingly did they lend their aid for a small consideration that I was never compelled to resort to the ingenious labor-saving expedient employed by an Englishman of my acquaintance. When he has a puncture he conceals himself in a convenient clump of bushes, leaving his young and pretty wife standing beside the car registering discouragement until some chivalrous motorist comes along and gallantly offers to change the tire.

Due perhaps to the fact that I usually derive as much satisfaction from anticipation as from realization, I have always found keen enjoyment in planning and assembling an outfit, whether for a fishing trip in Canada, an African safari, or, as in this case, a motor journey through the European borderlands. I realize, however, that there are many who take no interest in such details, and these I would advise to skip the pages immediately following. But I take it for granted that some of my



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readers will wish to know how we prepared for a somewhat unusual journey, portions of which were made under very trying conditions. It was essential that every contingency should be foreseen and provided against, for we were bound for regions where almost anything might happen.

First of all, there was the question of the car itself. After corresponding with a score of American consuls and half that number of European automobile clubs, I finally settled on a seventy-horsepower brougham, the product of a concern which maintains agencies and supply depots in all the larger cities of continental Europe, for it was essential that I should be able to obtain spare parts promptly if I should need them. I decided on a closed car, in spite of the additional weight, both to insure protection from the bitter cold of the highlands and the suffocating dust of the plains, and because I detest having to get out and put up the top every time my wife remarks that it looks like rain.

The question of luggage presented a perplexing problem, for an amazing amount of impedimenta is required by three persons—particularly when two of them are women—for a journey of nearly a year's duration in almost every variety of climate, from the stifling heat of a Balkan summer to the piercing chill of subarctic regions. Moreover, I detest having the running-boards and fenders of my car laden with a miscellaneous assortment of bundles and belongings after the tin-can tourist fashion.



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I finally solved the problem by having the roof of the car reinforced with hickory slats laid lengthwise, this platform, 40 by 54 inches, being surrounded by a low iron rail. Fitting snugly into this space went four large cases, each having the capacity of a small steamer-trunk and each provided with a durable slip-cover which was proof against dust or rain. Attached to each of the running-boards by means of thumb-screws was a long, narrow case, the top covered with corrugated rubber of the same length and width as the running-board itself but low enough to permit of the doors being opened. One of these took care of our overcoats, raincoats, and blankets; in the other was stored a powerful hydraulic jack, a steel cable, four spare tubes, several tins of oil and gasoline, and a set of rubber chains, the latter proving invaluable on the slippery roads of the Balkan mountains and the inundated Hungarian plain. I also managed to find room for a fly-rod and tackle, for some of the finest fishing in the world is to be had in Bosnia, the Carpathians, and Finland. Two other cases, each forty inches long, slipped into the dust-proof metal trunk at the rear of the car. The rest of the luggage, including a portable typewriter and a miniature set of encyclopedias, was stowed in the interior of the car, sharing the rear seat with my daughter. Though it seemed to me that our impedimenta had been disposed of in neat and workmanlike fashion, my daughter insists that she will never go a-motoring with an author again,

## SOUTH TO THE BLUE WATER

because the encyclopedias left no room for her feet and the typewriter was always falling on her head when we rounded an abrupt corner or struck a thank-you-ma'am.

It goes without saying, of course, that numerous formalities must be complied with by the motorist who takes his car to Europe. He is largely relieved of these vexatious details, however, by the steamship company to which he intrusts his car for shipment. I might mention, parenthetically, that the motorist who contemplates touring in Europe will find it well worth while to obtain a temporary membership in the Royal Automobile Club if he intends to land in England, or in one of the French automobile clubs if he is debarking at a continental port.

The cost of shipping an automobile across the Atlantic depends, of course, upon its weight. To ship a closed car weighing between 2500 and 4500 pounds from New York to Le Havre costs \$200, or \$340 for the round trip, but this includes the charges for registration with the United States customs, a triptych, an international customs pass, French and international license plates, a brass identity plate engraved with the owner's name and address, French and international driving licenses, a French *permit de circulation* good for six weeks, membership in either the Touring Club de France or the Automobile Club de l'Ile de France (depending on the countries to be visited), marine insurance up to

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

\$1000, a set of French road maps and guide-books, and twenty liters of gasoline.

The triptych, which is as essential to the motorist as his passport, is a booklet containing a series of numbered and detachable leaves—*carnets d'entrée* and *carnets de sortie*—with spaces on each for the name and address of the owner and a complete description of the car. Upon crossing a frontier a *carnet de sortie* must be filled out and detached by the customs authorities of the country one is leaving and the corresponding *carnet d'entrée* must be surrendered to the officials of the country one is entering. In western Europe, where international touring has become general and where the officials are familiar with triptychs, the formalities seldom occupy more than a few minutes. But in the border states, where the frontier posts are frequently in charge of ignorant and suspicious soldiers, and where every stranger is regarded as a Bolshevik spy until he proves himself innocent, we were more than once subjected to tedious delays and irritating inquisitions.

Once the car has been delivered to the company's freight agent on the wharf in New York the owner's responsibility ceases. The gas tank is drained, the batteries disconnected, the car is run by hand on to a platform designed for the purpose, the arm of a giant crane dips majestically down and picks it up, and it is lowered into a rubber-floored garage in the bowels of the ship as gently as a baby is laid in

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a cradle. The garages on some of the larger vessels are as spacious and completely equipped as those in good-sized cities. The *Paris*, for example, has a garage for thirty cars; the giant *Ile de France* has accommodation for twice that number. Realizing the growing importance of the business, the French Line now sends a corps of mechanics out on the tender to work on the cars as the ship is being warped into dock. They connect the batteries, affix the registration plates, fill the tank with gasoline, and otherwise prepare the car for speedy debarkation, the average unloading time per automobile having been reduced to four and a half minutes.

Yet, despite the efficiency of the steamship people, no moment in all the varied hours of our journey across Europe was fraught with such anxiety as that perilous portion of time when we beheld our one and only car swaying precariously between the lofty deck of the liner and the quayside at Le Havre at the mercy of what appeared to be the most inadequate of cables. The slender strand of steel seemed altogether too frail to support its burden. My daughter and I watched the performance fascinated, but my wife turned away in agony until the wheels had come to rest upon the wharf.

An agent of the company handed me the keys, a portfolio containing the numerous papers, and a road map of the route from Le Havre to Paris, the customs inspectors glanced perfunctorily at our luggage and waved us past, and before our less fortu-



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nate fellow-passengers had settled themselves in the boat train, we were free to set out on the road to adventure. And what a thrill awaited me when, having piloted the car out of the reverberating customs shed and picked my way cautiously through the teeming traffic-congested purlieus of the busy seaport town, we debouched upon the broad black ribbon of asphalt which leads to Paris and beyond!

Here in the North winter was at hand; the leaves had fallen, leaving the branches gaunt and bare. The landscape was like a rich old tapestry, all russets, grays, and blues, overhung by that soft mulberry haze so characteristic of late autumn in northern France. A chill sea-wind drove in from the Channel and there was a hint of snow in the air. But little we cared, for we were headed south toward the bright blue water; we were following the spring. The vine-clad slopes and crumbling castles adown the valley of the Rhone; the sparkling peacock-tinted seas which wash the blue coast; old hill towns basking lazily in the Italian sun; the purple peaks and gloomy defiles of the Balkan ranges; slim minarets spearing the Albanian blue; the quaint, half-Oriental villages which fringe the lower Danube; brown-skinned men in turbans and baggy trousers, the hilts of weapons protruding from their vivid girdles; cloaked and fur-capped riders on wiry ponies galloping furiously across the Magyar plain; the black Carpathian forests; the silent far-flung steppes along the Muscovite border, bulbous domes



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of Russian churches looming fantastically above the sky-line; the desolate tundras of Lapland—through my windshield I could see them all. Like mirages in the desert, nebulous, colorful, alluring, they seemed to beckon and call.

Save in the towns and “agglomerations,” where the motorist is warned by signs—to which he usually pays no attention whatsoever—not to exceed twelve kilometers an hour, he may travel on European roads as fast as he pleases without fear of constables or speed-traps, though I must confess that it took me some time to overcome a sudden palpitation of the heart when I heard a motorcycle *chug-chugging* up from behind. On the whole, Europeans drive considerably faster than Americans and far more recklessly. And they positively revel in noise. No self-respecting European motorist will drive a car unless it is provided with a cut-out and can produce a racket which would drown the combined sounds of a steam riveter and a machine gun.

Europeans employ an entirely different system of driving from our own. Instead of slowing down upon approaching a curve, they charge it at top speed, jamming on the brakes only when on the very brink of disaster, thus causing the rear end of the car to skid over a full semicircle, which is not good for the tires, the brakes, or the nerves of the passengers. Before I had been in Europe an hour I was struck by the fact that nearly every other car we passed had a large red triangle painted on its left

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rear fender. At first I assumed that this emblem meant that the owner was a member of the Y.M.C.A., and was greatly impressed by the astonishing increase in that organization's European membership; but inquiries developed the fact that a red triangle meant that the car bearing it was equipped with four-wheel brakes, thereby giving warning to those behind that it could stop abruptly. Incidentally, the American custom of descending steep mountain grades in second gear appears to be unknown on the Continent, and, as a consequence, the passes of the Alps, the Appenines, and the Pyrenees smell to heaven of burned brake-linings.

If one is content to jog along at, say, forty miles an hour he will find motoring in Europe as safe as it is delightful, but, save on the broad straight stretches of the *routes nationales*, a greater speed is apt to be extremely dangerous because of the narrow winding roads and the numerous farm vehicles and domestic animals which emerge from the walled farmyards and blind lanes at the most unexpected moments and without the slightest warning. On one occasion, while booming along through the rural districts of Provence, I saw a horse emerging from a farmyard gateway just ahead and slackened speed accordingly. It was well that I did so, for the first animal was followed by another, and another, and yet another, six of them harnessed tandem, as is the local custom, until the road was blocked from ditch to ditch by what looked like a circus procession.

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Even more exasperating are the enormously high-wheeled carts of the Basque coast, the Roman Campagna, and Slavonia, hauled by sometimes as many as four yokes of superb white oxen—immensely picturesque as they sway majestically and unhurriedly along, but to the impatient motorist supremely irritating. In Slovakia, toward sunset, the highways are choked by squawking waves of great white geese, driven by goose-girls so picturesquely attired that they might have stepped straight from the stage of a light opera; and when the supper-bells ring in the villages of Serbia and Hungary the motorist must slow to a walking pace because of the enormous droves of white and woolly pigs which crowd the roads from gutter to gutter as they go scurrying and squealing home to their respective troughs. The narrow mountain roads of Albania are preëmpted by droves of diminutive donkeys, only their ears and tails showing beneath their enormous burdens, and further south in the Balkans one encounters interminable caravans of camels, whose supercilious expressions reminded me of certain people I have met. In fact, the only domestic animal in Europe which failed to obstruct our progress during some stage of our journey was the reindeer.

I am frequently asked if motoring in Europe is not much more expensive than traveling by train. I should say, on the contrary, that, for two persons or more, motoring is considerably cheaper than first-class train travel, the cost of which has risen

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enormously since the war, and this notwithstanding the high cost of gasoline, the average price of which in western Europe is about fifty cents for five liters, or a trifle more than a gallon. In Serbia, where everything is expensive owing to oppressive taxation, I paid a dollar a gallon, but in the Baltic states, on the other hand, my fuel cost me little more than at home. Which reminds me that an Englishman whom I met on the Riviera, a traveled and cultivated man, asked me quite seriously if we had gasoline pumps in America. I assured him that they were becoming quite common.

“It’s really quite extraordinary, you know,” he remarked, “what progress you Americans are making. I suppose that in your eastern provinces you now have comparatively little trouble with the Indians.”

The high cost of gasoline—you must ask for petrol in England, for essence in France, and for benzine in all the other countries—is counterbalanced, however, by the low garage charges—rarely more than fifty cents a night—and by the extremely reasonable tariff for repairs of any kind, skilled mechanics receiving the equivalent of thirty cents an hour. There must also be taken into consideration the fact that the motorist saves the cost of taxicabs and sightseeing cars, of luggage—which since the war has become a very heavy item—and of tips to porters and railway employees. Furthermore, he is completely independent of hotel-keepers and tourist agencies. If he



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does not like the rooms or rates which are offered him, he has only to step into his car and drive on. For a few francs he can lunch on brook trout, roast chicken, strawberries, and a mellow native wine in the garden of some picturesque old inn; he can sleep for a dollar a night in quaint and quiet hostelries far from the tourist track. Judging from my own experience, I should say that a party of three or four persons could spend a summer motoring on the Continent for considerably less than they could make the same trip by train, even when the transatlantic freight charges on the car are taken into consideration, to say nothing of having a far more interesting and enjoyable time. It is quite true that one can hire a car in Europe, but this is a rather expensive business, costing from twenty-five dollars a day upward.

Another feature of motoring in Europe which should appeal to most Americans is the opportunity it offers for picking up antiques. In America, owing to the wide publicity given the subject in the magazines, the prices demanded for pretty much everything created prior to the black-walnut-and-marble period have become fantastic. But along the by-ways of the Continent astonishing bargains are still occasionally to be found. In a tumble-down château in Gascony last summer I purchased for forty dollars a Louis XIII arm-chair, superbly carved and with the original tapestry and gilding, which Richelieu might have sat in. It is a museum-piece and in America would command almost any price the owner cared

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to ask for it. In a little tavern in the Landes, where we stopped for a glass of wine, I discovered a hand-painted grandfather's clock, seven feet high, the great pendulum of gilded repoussé work set with figures in colored enamels. The owner assured me that it had been in his family for close on three hundred years, but he offered to sell it for the price of a modern timepiece because the works were out of order and because he was tired of seeing it around. In a village in the Bernese Oberland I bought a dozen rare old colored prints of animals, dated 1755, paying ten dollars for the lot. The picture of an American moose is labeled an eland, and the African baboon is called a satyr. Wandering one day through an obscure side street in a North German city, I came across a hand-painted four-panel screen of the Regency period, evidently the work of a master, of which the Metropolitan Museum would be proud. The price was four hundred marks—a hundred dollars. From a refugee Russian silversmith in Warsaw we purchased a set of Louis XIV silver plates for a trifle over the actual value of the silver. And the pawnshops of all those towns along the Russian border where refuge has been sought by fugitives from bolshevism still yield some astonishing bargains in furs, tapestries, paintings, enamelware, and jewels, though such finds are daily growing scarcer. I knew of one American minister who has furnished his entire legation in this manner, but he was early on the spot. Owing to the activities of dealers and



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the rapid increase in motor travel the time is rapidly approaching, however, when the prices of such treasure-trove will have risen to the American level, but for a few years more, at any rate, the back-blocks of continental Europe will remain a Golconda for the collector of *objets d'art* and antiques.

When we left Paris it was raining—one of those cold, dismal, late-autumn drizzles—and the car skidded perilously on the wet and shining asphalt as we wove in and out of the stream of morning traffic pouring through the Porte d'Italie. But the very name of the historic gate was suggestive of brighter skies and warmer lands, and ere we had passed Fontainebleau this promise began to be fulfilled, for the fields grew steadily greener as we fled southward and soon the sun was shining. It was still cold at Saulieu, however, and even the liquid fire of the Napoleon brandy which I ordered did not serve to keep out the chill of the musty rooms in the ancient inn. But by the following mid-day we had entered the broad valley of the Rhone, and before the spires and chimneys of Lyons had been left behind it was shining blue weather, with a constantly changing aspect of red-and-white villages and brown hills and far green meadows, and in the air was the welcome scent of spring.

It always pleases me to learn the specialties of the towns through which I pass while motoring, and, if they are edible, to try them. Thus, at Valence, we purchased fruit-cakes, heavy and rich; at Monté-

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limar we laid in a store of the sticky and delicious nougat for which that place has long been famous; at the hotel in Orange where we stopped for lunch we insisted on sampling the truffles and honey of the region; the most luscious *marrons glacés* I have ever tasted were those we bought in Avignon, amber lumps of congealed sweetness, almost as large as eggs.

The majestic triumphal arch at Orange—it was built by Trajan to commemorate his victory over one of the Gallic chieftains and is the third in size and importance in Europe—served to remind us that we were following the chariot-ruts of history, for the *route nationale* which borders the left bank of the Rhone is the modern counterpart of the great Roman road which the legions trod on their marches between the capital of the empire and the outposts in farther Gaul.

South of Orange we encountered heavy inundations and were compelled to proceed with the utmost caution. Fields, hedges, and roads alike were under water, in places to a depth of several feet, and I had to shape a course as though at sea, getting my bearings from the stately poplar trees which border the French highways like lines of giant sentinels. Though many of the great trunk roads of Europe have been permitted to fall into disrepair since the war, it is comforting to the motorist to know that at bottom they are hard, most of them being built on Roman foundations, so that, no matter how heavily

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it may have rained, there is no danger of one's car being stuck in the mud.

Owing to the delay caused by the inundations, nightfall was at hand when we splashed into Avignon, the home of exiled popes and errant troubadours, of Petrarch and his Laura. Seen from a distance, the ancient Provençal city suggests a Maxfield Parrish painting, the papal palace, standing four-square on its commanding rock, encircled by tawny, machicolated walls, presenting an appearance curiously theatrical and unreal. Loopholed for archers, flanked by a whole series of massive towers, and pierced by numerous gateways, these ramparts, built by the pontiffs a century before the discovery of the New World, provide one of the finest examples of mediæval fortification in Europe, being surpassed in France only by those of Carcassonne. But the time to see Avignon is late at night, when the townspeople have betaken themselves to bed, when all save a few of the street lights have been extinguished, when the walled streets and mysterious tunneled passages are enveloped in darkness and silence. Then one instinctively listens for the harsh challenges of sentries, the rattle of drawbridge chains, the reverberating clang of the portcullis, the trample of hoofs, and the clang of arms.

It was a night of glorious moonlight when we were there, which cast fantastic shadows athwart the cobbled streets and turned the tremendous pile of the papal fortress-palace into a shimmering edifice of

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mother-of-pearl. After dinner my daughter and I, picking our way through the deserted thoroughfares, passed out of the city by a postern-gate and emerged upon the Pont Saint-Bénézet, the half-demolished bridge, eight centuries old, which projects into the Rhone. The worn stones were chalk-white under the limelight of the moon, and beneath the ancient arches swirled a river of purple ink. It was an entrancing *mise en scène*. No vivid imagination was needed to hear again the rollicking strains of fiddle, hautboy, and bassoon, to see the lads and lasses of a long-past day dancing, heel and toe, “*sur le pont d’Avignon.*”

Bidding farewell to the Rhone at Avignon, we veered abruptly toward the east and tore across the smiling uplands of Provence, where every place name has its significance and is a little poem in itself. We halted for a brief space at Aix, the historic Provençal capital; at Brignoles, and again at Draguignan; went roaring up the steep slopes of the Estoril, the white road twisting and turning like a lariat tossed carelessly upon the ground; and from the summit looked down upon a panorama which is unsurpassed in all the world for utter loveliness. Below us the dark green of the pines merged into the gray-green of olive groves, and these, in turn, gave way to fields of gorgeous flowers, from amid which rose the white walls and red roofs of Grasse. Farther down, farther to the eastward, were Cannes, Nice, Villefranche, Monte Carlo, Mentone, strung along

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the white coast like jewels on the bosom of a beautiful woman. And in the far distance, where the Alps come down to meet the sea, the shores of Italy showed mistily through a violet haze.



## CHAPTER II

### ITALIANISSIMA

“TAKE my advice,” a friend said earnestly as I was leaving the Riviera for Rome, “and don’t mention his name in public while you are in Italy.”

“Whose name?” I asked.

“Mussolini’s, of course,” was the answer.

“But why shouldn’t I mention his name?” I demanded. “Italy is still a free country, isn’t it?”

“I’m not so sure about that,” he replied gravely. “Certainly it is no longer free in the sense in which we Americans think of freedom. In any event, it isn’t healthy for a foreigner to be overheard discussing the Duce and his policies in Italy these days. If you really wish to learn what is happening in the peninsula, keep your opinions to yourself and your ears open.”

I didn’t take his admonition very seriously, however, until a diplomat I have known for years, whom I ran across in Monte Carlo, gave me the same friendly warning. So did an English acquaintance, a man more familiar with Italian politics than most Italians, with whom I was having a cocktail in the



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bar of the Excelsior in Rome, glancing over his shoulder as he spoke to make certain that the bartender was out of hearing.

Even the Rome correspondent of one of the great press associations, a hard-boiled newspaper man whose views are not swayed by his imagination, in discussing the leader of fascismo as we were sauntering along the Corso one evening, repeatedly referred to him as "the Big Boy." I commented on his employment of the euphemism.

"If these Italians were to overhear us mentioning his name," he exclaimed, "they would probably jump to the conclusion that we were criticizing him and it might provoke an unpleasant incident.

"One of my colleagues has written a series of articles about the Big Boy for a certain American magazine," he continued, "but he didn't dare sign them with his own name. He is a friend of the Duce's too, and has an honest admiration for him, but the articles are pretty outspoken, and if the Fascists knew who had written them he would probably be given twenty-four hours in which to get across the frontier."

Needless to say, the Fascists will vehemently deny these assertions. In fact, they maintain one or two newspapers, printed in English, whose chief *raison d'être*, it would seem, is to impugn the veracity of anti-Fascist articles appearing in the foreign press and to vilify foreigners whose utterances are displeasing to fascismo. Any one is as free to discuss

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Mussolini, his adherents will assure you, as to discuss President Coolidge or King George. To discuss him, yes, but not to criticize him. If you doubt this, try the experiment of criticizing the Duce or his policies in any place where Fascists congregate and see what happens.

The warnings I have just quoted, though doubtless exaggerated, are significant in that they emphasize the abnormal state of the Italian mind. The Italians are convinced, rightly or wrongly, that the rest of the world, if not actually hostile to, is at least highly critical of, Mussolini and of fascism, which are virtually one and the same thing. Hence the suspicious, defiant, almost fanatical attitude which they have assumed. For Mussolini and fascism have become to Italians what Mohammed and Islam are to Moslems—a prophet and a religion.

In England if a man observes in public, "Well, I think that Stanley Baldwin and the Conservatives are making a mess of things," he has committed no offense in the eyes of the law and the remark would have no more serious effect than to precipitate a friendly discussion. But let a similar remark be made in Italy about Mussolini and the Fascist party, and the indiscreet speaker, after his wounds had been attended to, would be liable to arrest for sedition.

All countries have on their statute books laws directed against sedition, which has been defined as "language or conduct directed against public order

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and the tranquillity of the state." But the Fascists have gone much farther than this by enacting legislation which interprets criticism of their party or its leader as sedition and punishes it accordingly. In other words, the Fascist party is the state, and any language calculated to disturb that party's tranquillity, any distasteful criticism, no matter how constructive or well-intentioned, is punishable as sedition under the recent laws. If you can imagine a Republican Congress enacting legislation which punished by dismissal from the public service, fine, imprisonment, or even death, any opposition to the Republican party or any criticism of a Republican President, you will have a tolerably accurate mental picture of what has happened to public opinion in Italy.

Three hundred years ago John Milton wrote: "Give me liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all other liberties." But this doctrine, long since become axiomatic in most western countries, has not been accepted by the Fascists, who have assumed the right to control the expression of all opinion distasteful to them, whether uttered through the spoken or the printed word. In pursuance of this policy the Fascist Government has adopted drastic measures for the suppression of what we, like most other advanced peoples, have come to regard as two of our most cherished and inalienable rights—liberty of speech and liberty of the press.

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Under the authority of laws recently enacted, a newspaper which publishes news or opinions objectionable to the Fascist party may be compelled to suspend publication. Books which do not meet with Fascist approval may be confiscated and their authors prosecuted for sedition. Nor are Italians living outside the kingdom who indulge in anti-Fascist activities beyond the reach of the Fascist law, for they may be tried *in absentia*. If found guilty they may be deprived of their Italian citizenship, and if they have any property in Italy it may be confiscated. An Italian who is known to hold views opposed to those of the party in power may not even leave the country, as was shown by the recent refusal of the Fascist Government to permit the noted historian, Guglielmo Ferrero, to fill a series of lecture engagements in the United States. In short, public opinion is as effectually muzzled in Italy under the Fascists as it is in Russia under the soviet administration. "It isn't such a far cry from fascism to bolshevism as most people suppose," an American newspaper correspondent in Rome remarked to me not long ago. "Their purposes are diametrically opposed, it is true, but their machinery and their methods are the same."

In America—where, it must be admitted, liberty of speech and of the press frequently degenerate into license—the repressive attitude of the Fascist régime is hard to understand. Perhaps it would be putting it more aptly to say that it is hard for us to



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understand why a liberty-loving people like the Italians submit to it so docilely. But the Italians cannot be judged by American standards. The truth of the matter is that Italy has been confronted by appalling perils, is still faced, indeed, by difficult and dangerous problems, and, in order to combat these perils, to solve these problems, the Fascist Government has deemed it necessary to employ extraordinary means. That some of the means employed have been glaringly unconstitutional there can be no denying—but what is a constitution between Fascists? It should also be remembered that, however violently the methods of the Fascist Government would be resented by Anglo-Saxons, they have been accepted with enthusiasm by the great majority of the Italian people, who are, when all is said and done, the ones directly concerned.

Now it is utterly impossible to comprehend or sympathize with the Fascist attitude of mind unless you understand the conditions which gave birth to fascism. And, despite the tons of literature which have been written on the subject, these conditions do not appear to be clearly understood abroad, particularly in the United States, where most people think of fascism in terms of black-shirts, bayonets, and castor oil. At the risk, therefore, of repeating much with which my readers may be already familiar, I beg that they will bear with me while I sketch in briefest outline the amazing sequence of events which culminated in the Fascist revolution. Without

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such a background it is impossible to view in their true perspective the events which are taking place in Italy to-day.

The Fascist party is the outgrowth of an organization, the *Società di Combattenti*, which was formed immediately after the war by the men who had served in the Italian armies—a counterpart, in fact, of our own American Legion. The society was originally organized for the purpose of securing proper recognition for the men who had fought and won the war, and was, in its inception, merely a veterans' organization. It was not until later that it assumed a political complexion.

The end of the war found Italy in a state of internal chaos, hovering on the brink of bolshevism. Now that the censorship and the military restrictions were relaxed, the Socialists and the Communists, whose numbers and influence had been steadily increasing, took advantage of the war-weariness of the nation to foment revolutionary agitation, hoping to emulate their comrades in Russia by establishing in Italy a soviet republic. But the rest of the world did not realize the magnitude nor the imminence of the catastrophe which threatened. It was too absorbed in the mighty events which were happening beyond the Rhine, too intent on the terms of the peace settlements, to realize that Italy was on the verge of going Bolshevik.

The conditions were propitious for the overthrow of the existing régime. The Government at Rome was



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feeble, terrified, and vacillating. The country was in a desperate financial situation; the treasury was faced by an enormous deficit, and the lira, already on the toboggan, gave every indication of following the plunge of the mark. Prices had more than doubled and all over the kingdom riots broke out in protest against the intolerable cost of living. The discontent of the workers was steadily increasing. A series of avowedly revolutionary strikes were declared in every trade and even in the public services. Transport was completely disorganized. The railway men, traction employees, longshoremen, and postal-workers were idle and insubordinate, being wholly under the influence of the Communists, whose insidious propaganda was rapidly permeating the whole fabric of the nation.

To add to the difficulties of the Government, those classes which had no sympathy with communism were bitterly resentful at what they considered the unjust treatment Italy had received at the Peace Conference. Though Italy's war sacrifices had been enormous—600,000 dead and 570,000 permanently disabled for military service—Fiume and Dalmatia had been denied her and she had been given no share in the loot of the German colonies.

The internal troubles reached their height in the autumn of 1920, when, in retaliation for a lockout by the employers, the metal-workers, many of them armed, seized factories in Piedmont, Lombardy, and elsewhere, kidnapped the owners and managers, and

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sought to force them to operate the works solely for the benefit of the workers. Red guards were organized; revolutionary tribunals were established; political assassinations were of daily occurrence; the whole country trembled beneath a reign of fear. Meanwhile, the weak and timid government of Francesco Nitti remained supine; the politicians in Rome were too busy with their squabbles and intrigues to give heed to the red cloud which was settling upon the land. It seemed, at this moment, as though nothing could save Italy from bolshevism.

But a savior now stepped upon the Italian stage in the person of Benito Mussolini, a man of the people, the son of a blacksmith and a school-teacher. When the great war broke out, Mussolini, then thirty-one years old, was editor of the "Avanti!" the official organ of the Italian Socialists. Disagreeing with his pacifist associates over the question of Italian intervention on the side of the allies, he resigned the editorship of the "Avanti!" to found in Milan a paper of his own, the "Popolo d'Italia."

Upon Italy's entry into the war in 1915, Mussolini was called to the colors, serving as a private in the bersaglieri throughout the engagements in which that famous corps participated along the Isonzo and on the Carso until seriously wounded by the explosion of a trench-mortar in 1917. Upon his discharge from hospital he resumed work on the "Popolo d'Italia," endeavoring, in a series of flaming editorials, to arouse his apathetic countrymen to a realization of

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the extent and danger of the Communist movement. After the disaster at Caporetto, when the gloom of despondency enveloped the land, he was one of the few who never lost their courage or their optimism.

Mussolini was now bitterly hated by the Socialists, who regarded him as a traitor to their cause, and this hatred was intensified when, in order to combat the Bolshevist demonstrations which the Socialists organized after the armistice, he founded at Milan, in March, 1919, the first *Fascio di Combattimento*. Its members took their names from the *fascies* which they had adopted as their emblem: the bundle of rods inclosing an axe which was the symbol of authority in ancient Rome. "United we stand, divided we fall" was not their motto; but it might have been.

At first the Milan Fascio attracted to its ranks only a small fraction of those respectable and patriotic elements of the community which were opposed to the Bolshevist brand of socialism, and during the disturbances of 1919 and 1920 but a minor part was played by fascism. But the Fascist idea spread over Italy with amazing rapidity, and on the occasion of the bloody riots at Bologna in November, 1920, it was the Fascists who organized the law-abiding citizens and brought about the rapid collapse of the Reds, first in that city and subsequently throughout the valley of the Po. But the Red monster, though cowed, was still far from being beaten.

In order to protect life and property from Communist outrages, to defend the nation against what

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in many sections amounted to revolutionary tyranny, the first armed Fascist squads were now formed—Italian counterparts of the Colonial Minute Men, or, more accurately, of the Vigilance Committees which suppressed the disorderly elements during the lawless gold-rush days in California. These squads were composed for the most part of war veterans, accustomed to discipline and the use of arms, many of them wearing wound ribbons and decorations for valor. They were joined by others too young to have served and by not a few older men, exasperated at the spectacle of their country, victorious in the war, terrorized by a turbulent minority and menaced with anarchy.

Though at the outset fascism was by no means free from demagogism, it was unconnected with any particular labor policy. It soon made an appeal to the steadier, more conservative elements of the laboring classes, attracting non-union workmen, peasant proprietors, and farm-hands individually; but with the success of the Fascist campaign against the Reds in the valley of the Po, great numbers of workers enlisted in the organization, in some cases whole unions coming over in a body. This resulted in changing the character of fascism by modifying its policies and converting it from a minority to a mass movement.

Meanwhile government had succeeded government with a rapidity as bewildering as it was disheartening. The king would wake up in the morning with one



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cabinet and by nightfall would have an entirely different one. Encouraged by the inertia of the authorities, the Reds continued their campaign of violence and intimidation. Murders by Communists and bloody reprisals by Fascists were of almost daily occurrence. The crisis came on August 1, 1922, when a general strike throughout Italy was suddenly proclaimed, the Reds hoping to thus paralyze the country. By way of replying to this threat, the Fascists, whose organization now extended from one end of the kingdom to the other, ordered a general mobilization. Simultaneously the Fascist directorate issued a manifesto calling upon the strikers to return to work and giving the Government forty-eight hours in which to prove that it possessed authority over its own employees and those who were attempting to destroy the nation. "On the expiry of this delay," it was announced, "fascism will assume full control to supplant the state."

Though this vigorous action broke the back of the Communist movement, Mussolini was far-sighted enough to realize that the task of fascism, far from being ended, had only just begun. He maintained that if Italy was to become a really great nation, if the national safety was to be permanently secured, the whole body politic must be reformed, there must be a general house-cleaning. Otherwise, a similar crisis would sooner or later arise again. Realizing, however, that their program could not be carried out under the conditions which existed, the Fascists de-

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manded that the government be dissolved. This was refused. Thereupon Mussolini declared "either the government will be given to us or we shall seize it by marching on Rome." In other words, the Communist revolution had been succeeded by a Fascist revolution.

The government remaining obdurate, Mussolini proceeded to make good his threat by ordering his mobilized Fascists to advance on Rome. Participating in the movement were upward of 200,000 men, operating in four columns. As the black-shirted hosts approached the walls of the Eternal City, the prime minister and the military authorities implored the king to sign a decree placing the capital in a state of siege, but Victor Emmanuel showed his great good sense by forbidding any resistance, thereby averting certain bloodshed and, in all probability, civil war.

On the morning of October 30, 1922, the Fascist columns made their triumphal entry into Rome. The king promptly telegraphed for Mussolini, who was in Milan. A few hours later the Fascist leader presented himself at the Quirinal with a cabinet list, on which he himself was designated for prime minister, in his hand. This the king immediately accepted. ✓ Fascism had become the government of Italy and the blacksmith's boy, Benito Mussolini, had become the successor to the Cæsars.

Before proceeding with an account of what the Fascists have accomplished during the half-dozen



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years that have passed since they seized the whip and reins, I wish to make it clear that fascismo is not a political party as we in America understand that term. If an American says "I'm a Republican" or "I'm a Democrat," there is no one to contradict him. But no Italian can say "I'm a Fascist" unless he has been duly nominated, scrutinized, and admitted to the Fascist organization, which is not a faction but a clearly defined, closely knit association, a sort of gigantic political society, which has at the present time approximately a million enrolled members. These, and these alone, may call themselves Fascists or wear the Fascist uniform and emblem. Instead of increasing the membership of the organization, which could easily be done, it has been decided to admit no more applicants for the time being. In fact, steps are now being taken to reduce the membership by purging it both of dangerous extremists and of those who are suspected of being lukewarm. Though the enrolled members of the Fascist party comprise less than one fortieth of the total population of the kingdom, their sympathizers are so numerous as to give fascism complete control of the political situation.

"But what about the opposition?" I hear you ask. "You don't expect us to believe, do you, that there is no opposition, that all the voters in Italy see eye to eye politically?"

There are, of course, large numbers of Italians who are violently opposed to fascism, and these

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✓ opponents are by no means confined to disgruntled Socialists and vindictive Communists, but include many thoughtful, sincere, and deeply patriotic men. But, like the negroes of the South, they realize that they had better abstain from mixing in politics, or even from expressing their opinions, if they wish to keep whole skins. Besides, their votes wouldn't count—or be counted—anyway.

In the field of domestic legislation the Fascist Government has undertaken some of the most significant and daring experiments of modern times. Mindful of the fact that the chaotic conditions which brought Italy to the verge of bolshevism and precipitated the Fascist revolution were an outgrowth of the age-old conflict between capital and labor, the Government early set itself to the task of finding a solution for this dangerous problem.

The Napoleonic Code, on which the common law of Italy is based, recognized to a limited extent the right of employers to organize and lock out their employees, while at the same time absolutely denying this right to the workers. Socialism, on the other hand, insisted that the workers alone had the right of organizing and striking. But fascism, boldly discarding the theory that the state must remain neutral and aloof in disputes between capital and labor, ✓ has sternly forbidden the classes to make war against each other, making it compulsory for them to compose their differences by arbitration.

The law of April 3, 1926, is perhaps the most revo-

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lutionary labor legislation ever enacted in any country outside of Russia. It provided, first of all, for the establishment of a new department of government, known as the Ministry of Corporations, this portfolio being taken by Mussolini himself. Secondly, it gave legal recognition to the syndicates (a term which includes labor unions, employers' associations, guilds) and invested them with authority to represent the various categories—employers, employees, professional men, landlords, farmers, etc.—in their dealings with the Government and with each other. It should be noted, however, that legal recognition is extended to only one syndicate for each category, a *sine qua non* for such recognition being satisfactory proof that the syndicates carry out educational, moral, and patriotic work among their members. The administrative expenses of the various syndicates are paid by the state out of the funds raised from the taxes imposed on them, thus eliminating anything resembling the pernicious "check-off" system. Thirdly, the law created special labor tribunals attached to the courts of appeal, and requires that all disputes between capital and labor be referred to them. Lastly, strikes and lockouts are declared to be illegal, teeth being put into the law by the provision that all persons promoting them or participating in them shall be subject to criminal prosecution.

Though the law has not been in operation long enough to convincingly demonstrate its success or

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failure, its workings are certain to be watched with profound interest by thoughtful men everywhere. For the world is rapidly losing patience with governments which view with calm indifference economic squabbings which threaten the prosperity and security of the state and in many cases bring on what amounts to civil war.

Of the numerous political measures enacted by the Fascist régime, none has aroused more criticism abroad than the law aimed at the suppression of ✓ Freemasonry, which, as might be expected, has brought violent denunciations from Masonic organizations the world over. This law, which was passed in December, 1925, requires the officers of all associations, secret or otherwise, to communicate to the police their constitution, by-laws, rules, lists of members, and all other information relative to their organization and activities, failure to do so being punishable by imprisonment or fine. The law also forbids all functionaries and civil servants, whether in the employ of the state, provinces, or municipalities, to belong to secret societies, under pain of dismissal.

In defense of this legislation it may be pointed out that Italian Freemasonry has developed along entirely different lines from the institution so favorably known in Anglo-Saxon countries. As a result of its political and anti-religious tendencies, Freemasonry in Italy has repeatedly come into conflict with the state and with the Roman Catholic church,



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in which respect it resembles the Ku-Klux Klan. In the days when Italy was seeking to win her independence, secret societies had their tasks and functions, but to-day, the Facists assert, politics can and must be a daylight affair and secrecy no longer has the slightest justification. It is safe to say, however, that had the Freemasons rigorously abstained from meddling in politics, and confined themselves to fraternal and benevolent activities, the Fascists would have left them alone.

Another daring innovation introduced by the Fascists was the abolition of the electoral system for choosing the mayors and councils of cities and towns and the substitution of the *podestà* form of government—*podestà* being the title of a chief magistrate in the mediæval Italian republics—whereby the administration of the various municipalities is intrusted to magistrates named by the crown. This system, inaugurated in 1926, has now been extended to all the communes in the kingdom with the exception of Rome, which is administered by a royal governor, and of Naples, which is under the control of a high commissioner. Two factors entered into the decision of the Fascists to do away with municipal elections—on the one hand, a recognition of the miserable condition into which many of the municipalities had been plunged by factional struggles for power, by the inefficiency and corruption of local officials; on the other, a conviction that municipal officials should be chosen for their honesty and ability,



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neither of which was assured under the electoral system. To put it in a nutshell, the Fascist Government has determined that Italy shall be well governed rather than self-governed.

The internal security of the Fascist state is maintained by an organization, created in 1923, known as the Volunteer Militia for National Safety. This is nothing more or less than the military organization of the Black Shirts who marched on Rome in 1922 and seized the Government. Their revolutionary task accomplished, Mussolini, recognizing that such a mass of armed men constituted a possible menace to the authority of the state, took steps to regularize their position, to insure their discipline, and to control their activities by transforming them into a national militia.

This body, which now numbers approximately 300,000 men, is a complement of the army and an auxiliary of the police. It combines the functions of our own National Guard and state constabularies without being exactly analogous to either of them. It assists the police in maintaining order in the towns and cities of the kingdom; it trains the youth of Italy to arms; it keeps them in training after they have completed their prescribed service in the army; it fosters a military and patriotic spirit; it is, in short, the bulwark of fascism, the bodyguard of the revolution.

Though the Government provides the funds for its upkeep, the cost of the militia is reduced to a mini-

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mum, being restricted to little more than the provision of barracks, arms, and equipment. When the militiamen are called up for service in their own districts, where they can have their meals in their own homes, they receive no pay. When this is not practicable they receive a sum sufficient merely to cover the cost of their rations. Only those officers who are permanently on duty, attached to the general and zone commands, are paid. The initial outfit is provided by the state, each militiaman receiving a tunic, a pair of baggy Zouave trousers, puttees, and a tasseled fez; all other requisites must be provided by the man himself.

The organization of the Fascist militia has been patterned on the military system of the ancient Romans, though with certain modifications. The kingdom has been divided into sixteen zones, each under the command of a lieutenant-general, who is equal in rank to a major-general of the regular army. In each zone there are a certain number of legions, which vary according to its size and population. The legion, which is the basic unit of the organization, corresponds to a regiment and is under the command of a consul. A legion consists of from three to six cohorts, each commanded by a senior. The cohort consists of three centuriæ, a centuria of three manipuli, a manipulum of three squads. The men are armed with carbines and automatic pistols, which they keep in their homes.

In order to insure the continuance of the country's

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transportation facilities in any emergency, special divisions of the militia had been created for permanent duty on the railways and at the ports. It is the business of these men to protect warehouses and freight trains against pilferage, to police wharves and railway stations, and to see that the regulations of the railway administration are strictly enforced. Under the Fascist régime passengers on Italian railways are no longer permitted to fill their compartments with hand luggage without paying for it at excess rates, a rule which the black-shirted militiamen enforce to the last kilogram; nor do they hesitate to reprimand those travelers who injure the property of the state by putting their feet on the seat-cushions. Another section of the Fascist militia consists of a corps of detectives, a sort of secret police, which has been created for the delicate task of political espionage and investigation. The activities of these secret agents, which correspond to those of the third section of the old czarist police, extend into every walk of Italian life, every one, high or low, native or foreigner, being subject to their surveillance. Thanks to this highly developed system of espionage, the Fascist Government knows who its enemies are, keeps a vigilant eye on their activities, and is in a position to crush them when they become dangerous or troublesome.

No one familiar with pre-war Italy can truthfully deny that in many respects the country has made amazing progress under Fascist rule. The first thing

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that impresses the traveler is the immense improvement which has been effected in the railway service. The carriages are scrupulously clean; luxurious sleeping-cars, built in Italian shops, have been added to the equipment; and the trains, long the joke of Europe, now run on time. The dirt and discomfort of the journey from Ventimiglia to Pisa, with its one hundred and eighty sooty tunnels, have been largely eliminated by the electrification of that line, while the recent completion of an electric railway from Rome to Naples has cut the former running time of five hours in half. Under the watchful eyes of the Fascist militiamen, a detachment of whom accompany every train, the railway employees have become models of efficiency and politeness.

In its anxiety to encourage travel in the peninsula, particularly by foreigners, whose expenditures form one of the most important of Italy's "invisible" revenues, the Fascist régime has sought to abolish the tipping evil by decreeing that tips shall be added to the hotel bills, the percentage charged for service varying according to the categories into which the hotels have been divided. Though the acceptance of tips by hotel employees is now, at least in theory, illegal, the nuisance has been by no means entirely eliminated, for there will always be servants who will take gratuities surreptitiously so long as there are guests who insist on giving them. In the spring of 1927, when the exorbitant hotel charges, plus the sudden rise in the lira, was having a disastrous effect



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on the tourist industry, the Fascist Government promptly interfered, ordering the proprietors to make immediate and drastic reductions in their tariffs.

The police force of the kingdom has been entirely reorganized. The corrupt and inefficient Guardia Reale has been disbanded. In the larger cities a serious attempt is being made to introduce up-to-date traffic regulations, though the narrowness of the streets makes this a very difficult problem. The Camorra and the Mafia, those sinister secret societies which so long terrorized southern Italy, have been ruthlessly stamped out. The verminous and importunate mendicants are no longer permitted to pester visitors to churches and museums. Cab-drivers have found that they can no longer overcharge their patrons with impunity. There has been an astonishing decrease in crime. The slums of Rome, a standing reproach for centuries, are being demolished to make way for spacious thoroughfares and modern tenement-houses. Sanitary regulations are rigorously enforced; even in the poorest districts the streets are scrupulously clean, and one no longer flirts with typhoid by drinking city water.

A vigorous campaign against malaria, Italy's most widespread disease, has been inaugurated by taking steps to exterminate the mosquito and to drain the miasmal marshes. Measures against trachoma, the contagious eye disease with which hundreds of thousands of the poorer classes are afflicted, include the





THE DICTATOR AND THE KING  
Massimo greets King Victor Emmanuel



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establishment of numerous free dispensaries and eye hospitals, strict vigilance in schools and working centers, special courses of training and propaganda.

Legislation has also been enacted to provide for the assistance and protection of mothers and children; the number of maternity hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries has been greatly increased; and the state has assumed the task of exercising continuous hygienic, educational, and moral vigilance over all children under fourteen years of age who live outside the homes of their parents. For Mussolini has realized that, in order to be prosperous and powerful, a country must have for its foundations a strong and healthy people.

Fascism maintains that it is the duty of the state to protect the moral no less than the physical welfare of the people. Accordingly, a rigid censorship of theatrical performances and cinematographic productions has been established, many plays and motion pictures which pack the theaters of American cities being absolutely prohibited in Italy. Dance halls of a questionable character, night clubs, pornographic publications, and posters which make a licentious appeal have been suppressed. The use of alcoholic beverages, including wine, and of tobacco by children under fifteen years of age has been forbidden, while the use of high-power spirits by adults has been discouraged by the imposition of heavy excise duties.

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This is an amazing list of achievements for any government, the more amazing when it is remembered that it is the product of little more than half a decade, and for it the Fascist Government is deserving of unstinted praise. But it seems to me that the most remarkable of fascism's achievements has been the awakening of the national conscience, the fanning into white-hot flame of a latent national pride, the rousing among all classes of a sense of responsibility to the state, the inculcation of that spirit of obedience and discipline which is characteristic of the Germans but heretofore has been conspicuously lacking in the Italians. "Let us have less talk about the people's 'rights,' " says Mussolini, "and more about their duty."

It is the duty of Italians, he asserts, to support home industries, and, in order to compel them to do so, excessive duties have been placed on all, or nearly all, articles of foreign origin. It is their duty to subscribe to the national loans, though no mention is made of the fact that the last one, the *Prestito del Littorio*, was in effect a forced loan. Every firm and individual engaged in business in the kingdom was required to subscribe specified amounts based on their tax assessments. The great industrial and mercantile houses were called upon to bear their share and so were the little fellows—grocers, innkeepers, milliners, shoemakers, barbers. No one was exempt. Capital is very scarce in Italy and many of those doing business in a small way are having a desperately

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hard time, but no excuses were accepted. If one was obdurate and refused to subscribe the amount allotted to him, his license to do business was promptly withdrawn.

The newly awakened confidence and pride of the Italians in themselves, their Government, their leader, and their destiny, though stimulated by ballyhoo methods, nevertheless constitute a national renaissance such as the world has seldom seen. By nature one of the most individualistic and egotistic of peoples, the Italians have subordinated these qualities to the common good at the demand of fascism, into which they have flung themselves with a blind devotion. Fascism has become, indeed, the national religion and Mussolini is venerated as its prophet. To so much as question the beneficence of the one or the supreme wisdom of the other is equivalent, in Italian eyes, to heresy, if not actual treason. When, in the motion-picture houses, the short, squat figure of the Duce is flashed upon the screen, the spectators rise to their feet as one. In every public building in the kingdom Mussolini's portrait hangs beside that of the sovereign. The Fascist hymn, "Giovanezza" ("Youth"), has almost supplanted the national anthem. The truth of the matter is that the nation has been skilfully worked up to a frenzy of patriotic fervor, the emotions of the people have been played upon until they have attained a revival-meeting pitch of exaltation. Billy Sunday's efforts in this line are feeble and amateurish in comparison. It is a case of



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“Glory, glory, Mussolini! Praise fascism from which all blessings flow!”

The abnormal state of mind which has thus been produced manifests itself in numerous forms—in the bombastic utterances of the Fascist leaders, in the defiant editorials of the Fascist-controlled press, in the grandiloquent phrasing of the placards and proclamations which appear on every hoarding, in the high-strung, chip-on-the-shoulder attitude of the people themselves. When the war ended, the Italians were sunk in the depths of discouragement and despondency; to-day they are firmly convinced that they are the coming nation, that they have an imperial destiny, that they can whip the world. Naturally a mercurial people, it is hardly surprising, perhaps, that their suddenly acquired self-confidence has gone to their heads, that they have lost their sense of proportion. The danger—and it is a very real danger indeed—is that if this megalomania is permitted to continue unchecked it may eventually imperil the peace of Europe. Imperial Rome, remember, sought to increase its power at the expense of other nations. So did imperial Germany. As long as fascism confines its activities and ambitions to Italy it is strictly a family affair and concerns no one but the Italians, but when it gives evidence of harboring an intention to cross Italy's frontiers it becomes everybody's business.

While it would be unwise to attempt to draw any close parallel between the Italy of to-day and the

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Germany of before 1914, no close observer can fail to note certain similarities of thought and attitude in the two nations which are distinctly disturbing. Both are young nations, but both peoples have centuries of cultural and military traditions behind them. The Kaiser was wont to invoke the spirit of Attila and the Huns. Mussolini invokes the spirit of Augustus and the legions. Just as Germany before the war considered that every man's hand was against her, that she was being "encircled" and denied those fruitful colonies to which her industry and importance entitled her, so Italy feels that French diplomacy is seeking to effect her political isolation, to hinder her legitimate expansion in Africa, Asia Minor, and the Balkans. Both nations have rapidly rising birth-rates and alike require outlets for their surplus populations. Germany dreamed of an empire in the East and talked of the *Drang nach Osten*; Italy talks of the Cæsars and dreams of reviving the empire of Rome. Italy is rapidly becoming as militaristic under the Fascists as Germany was under the Hohenzollerns. Germany sought "a place in the sun" and Italy is seeking the same thing, being forced by circumstances to set about acquiring it in more or less the same way that Germany did.

Though no fair-minded man can withhold his respect and admiration for what fascism has accomplished in the regeneration of Italy, it is not so easy to applaud its conduct of Italy's foreign relations, which are viewed by keen observers with increasing

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apprehension. For the Fascists apparently fail to realize that the brusque and arbitrary methods which they have used so successfully in dealing with their own people cannot fail to arouse resentment and hostility when employed in dealing with other nations. That Italy to-day finds herself encircled by a ring of nations which, if not actually hostile, are certainly suspicious and unsympathetic, is no one's fault but her own.

Italy's jealousy of France—the Italians put it the other way round—is traditional. Though it was all but extinguished during the war, when the two countries faced a common peril, it flamed more fiercely than ever when at the Peace Conference France refused to support Italian territorial demands. The damaging disclosures made at the time of the arrest of Ricciotti Garibaldi, which tended to prove that the grandson of the Italian liberator was employed by the Fascists to embroil France with Spain, produced a highly delicate situation, which was further aggravated by France's refusal to permit the 85,000 Italians living in Tunisia to retain their Italian citizenship. Nor have the relations between the two countries been improved by the declarations of Italian extremists that Italy has never forgiven the annexation by France of Nice and Savoy in 1860 and is biding her time until she shall recover them. At the bottom of Italy's animosity for France, however, is the conviction that French diplomacy, by means of intrigues, ententes, and alliances, is seeking

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to erect a barrier against Italian expansion in the Balkans. Back of all her trans-Adriatic troubles Italy professes to see the hand of the Quai d'Orsay.

But if Italy's relations with her powerful neighbor on the northwest are, to put it mildly, far from cordial, her relations with Yugoslavia are infinitely worse, those who are behind the scenes of European politics being perfectly aware that it would not take much to precipitate a conflict between the two countries, both of which are in a highly belligerent mood. Italy's quarrel with Yugoslavia dates from the Peace Conference, when the representatives of America, England, and France rejected Italy's claims to Fiume and Dalmatia. Though Italy was awarded Trieste and seized Fiume, her friction with the Yugoslavs has brought her ambitious plans for the development of those ports to naught. Trieste, formerly the most important and prosperous port on the Adriatic, is slowly dying, and Fiume is already dead commercially, largely as a result of what amounts to a Yugoslav boycott, the vast trade which flows through them having been diverted to Yugoslavia's own ports on the Adriatic or to the German ports. The Italians claim that Yugoslavia, not content with jockeying Italy out of territory conquered by Italian arms, and of effecting the ruin of Fiume and Trieste, is now hatching plans to seize Albania, which, though theoretically independent, has become to all intents and purposes an Italian protectorate. To this the Yugoslavs retort that in annexing the



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Veneto, Italy forced her sovereignty on half a million Croats and Slovenes against their will, that her agents are secretly fomenting trouble on the Albanian frontier, and that she has no business in the Balkans anyway.

That an armed conflict did not break out between Italy and Yugoslavia in March, 1927, was probably due to the prompt and energetic action of Mussolini, who informed the chancelleries of the powers and the press associations that he had irrefutable proof that Yugoslavia was secretly preparing to intervene in Albania. If the Yugoslavs had such a plan, which they stoutly deny, this premature publicity nipped it in the bud. No one attempts to deny, however, that the relations between the two countries remain extremely tense and that it would not take much to break them. It may be asserted, indeed, with little fear of contradiction, that the most imminent danger which threatens the peace of Europe to-day is to be found at the head of the Adriatic, where two great races, Slav and Latin, meet.

I am no alarmist, and I cannot but believe that the statesmen of Rome and Belgrade will devise some way of reconciling their differences before it is too late, but it can do no harm to speculate for a moment how, in the event of a rupture, the other nations would aline themselves.

France would certainly give her moral support to Yugoslavia, for the interests of the two are largely the same, both being bitterly opposed to any exten-



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sion of Italian influence in the Balkans. Czechoslovakia, which, as a member of the Little Entente, is an ally of Yugoslavia, would also probably stand behind the Government at Belgrade, particularly as Prague is under the thumb of the Quai d'Orsay. Though there is no love lost between the Yugoslavs and the Bulgarians, they are, after all, both Slavic peoples. It is entirely conceivable, therefore, that in the event of Italian aggression the two might patch up their differences, for the Slavs are a clannish race and apt to stick together. That Italy could count on the support of Greece seems to me improbable in the extreme, for the Greeks have neither forgotten nor forgiven the Italian bombardment and occupation of Corfu, though the Italians profess to believe that Athens harbors no resentment over that high-handed proceeding, which was a slap in the face for the League of Nations. The Italians would also have to reckon with an unfriendly Turkey—which would, however, hold aloof, for the Turks have not forgotten that as recently as 1926 Mussolini cautiously sounded the European chancelleries as to their attitude in the event that Italy should decide to reassert her claims to the Adalia region of Asia Minor, which the allies had promised her, in a secret treaty, upon the division of the Turkish spoils. Nothing further was heard about such an adventure, however, when Mustapha Kemal exclaimed, “Come, then! Your trouble will be to find burying room!”

Though at the time the Italians frantically ap-

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plauded Mussolini's belligerent gestures against neighboring nations, it has been noticeable of late that he has changed his policy and has been studiously soft-pedaling all talk of war. Perhaps he has realized that Italy has made too many enemies, that "chickens come home to roost."

In order to strengthen herself against Yugoslavia, and incidentally to offset France's growing influence in the Balkans by weakening the Little Entente, which is a French instrument, Italy has been doing a little quiet "encircling" on her own account. The first step in Mussolini's scheme for the political isolation of Yugoslavia was to effect an understanding with Rumania, as a result of which Bucharest has given evidences of gradually drifting away from the Little Entente. The second was the conclusion, in April, 1927, of a treaty with Hungary, which, though it has no intention of lending itself to Italian designs, never for a moment forgets that the Yugoslavs have enforced their sovereignty on nearly half a million Magyars. There is also reason to believe that Rome has been flirting with Sofia, it having been persistently rumored that Princess Giovanna, the third daughter of the King of Italy, was betrothed to the young Bulgarian king. Albania, as I have remarked, is already within the Italian orbit, the weak Government at Tirana being virtually under the domination of Rome. It is common knowledge that Italian diplomacy is also bending its efforts toward persuading Greece to overlook the Corfu incident and is

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backing the Greeks in their opposition to Yugoslavia's aspirations for an outlet to the Ægean. Should Italy succeed in these endeavors, her encirclement of Yugoslavia would be complete.

In shaping her plans there is no doubt that Italy counts heavily on her traditional friendship with England, for the peninsular kingdom has no fuel deposits of its own and in the event of war would be compelled to depend on England for coal and oil. Though it is quite possible that England would not object to a readjustment of the balance of power in the Balkans and the eastern Mediterranean, those who are in a position to know whereof they speak assert that the British Government is doing its utmost to soft-pedal Italy's warlike inclinations.

Mussolini has also carried on a mild flirtation with his fellow-dictator, Primo de Rivera, but without conspicuous success, for Spain is fully occupied with domestic problems and with her perennial troubles in Morocco. In his negotiations with Berlin the Duce has been more successful. In spite of the flare-up over the question of South Tyrol a year or so ago, Italy and Germany have been steadily drawing closer together ever since the war and to-day their relations may truthfully be described as cordial. The Germans outnumber all other visitors to Italy, where they are warmly welcomed; the second daughter of the king recently married a German prince; and the total of German investments in the peninsula is said to be enormous. Indeed, there is a steadily growing

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belief that Italy and Germany would be found on the same side in the event of another general European line-up.

Whether the Fascist Government actually expects war, I have, of course, no means of knowing, but there is every evidence of a systematic preparation for it. The war spirit is in the air, though upon second thought perhaps it would be more exact to say that the nation is aflame with martial ardor. The streets of Naples, Rome, Florence, Milan, teem with men in uniform. Black-shirt battalions maneuver everywhere. Squads of youths under Fascist instructors spend their recreation hours drilling in the parks and playgrounds. The active army, including the carbineers and the colonial forces, numbers about 400,000 officers and men, but to this must be added the Fascist militia, which numbers another 300,000. (The total strength of France's peace establishment, including native troops, is about 735,000.) In 1927 nearly a billion lire were expended on the navy, which, though still slightly inferior to that of France on paper, possibly exceeds it in efficiency. It is in preparation for aërial warfare, however, that Italy is making her greatest preparations. The air force, now organized as a separate service under a high commissioner for aviation, is being feverishly increased.

In 1927 Italy had 1500 planes, of which 850 were in active employment, as against France's 1350 planes, but steps have already been taken by the



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Fascist Government to increase this number to 4500 planes, thereby giving Italy an air force incomparably greater than that of any other country, or any other two countries for that matter, in the world. At night the larger cities of Italy blaze with huge electric signs which proclaim, "The future of Italy lies in the air. Every Italian youth should learn to be an aviator." In the manufacture of airplanes, airships, and mechanical transport Italy is now in the forefront of industrial nations, while in regard to armament she is self-supporting. And—which is of particular significance—the government arsenals in the North are to be moved farther down the peninsula in order to place them beyond the reach of enemy bombing planes.

"We are preparing for war because we expect war," said an Italian friend of mine, a man of such high standing in the councils of the Fascist party that his utterances cannot be disregarded. "We are being forced into it in order to protect our national interests. At the Peace Conference our allies treacherously took advantage of our weak and demoralized condition to cheat us out of the territories which our arms had won. Now that we are united and powerful, we are going to take those fruits of victory which were denied us—peacefully if we can, by force if we must. It is not a question of imperialism but an economic one. Our population, which has already passed that of France, is increasing so rapidly—at the rate of more than half a million a year—that we must



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have more elbow-room. As Mussolini has said, we must 'Expand or explode.' "

"But whom are you going to fight?" I asked him.

"Yugoslavia first," he replied promptly, "and, if France interferes, then we will fight her also."

"Yugoslavia," he continued, "offers a menace to our national welfare which has become intolerable. She can no longer be permitted to obstruct our legitimate aspirations in the Balkans or to challenge our domination of the Adriatic, which is historically an Italian sea. We are fully prepared to give the Yugoslavs commercial outlets adequate to their needs, but we are adamant in our determination to regain Dalmatia, which is ours both historically and by right of conquest, and whose harbors and islands provide ideal bases for naval operations against us. As for France, she must cede us Tunisia, which is rightfully ours by virtue of Italian colonization but out of which she cheated us in eighty-one."

Let me make it perfectly clear that this represents the extreme Fascist view; it is chauvinistic, bombastic, fantastic, probably impossible of realization—but it is, nevertheless, a view held by millions of Italians and as such is deserving of quotation.

I didn't take this conversation very seriously, however, until, a few evenings later, I was dining with a group of American newspaper men—the Rome correspondents of the great dailies and press associations. By virtue of long residence in the country all of them know Italy and the Italian people; they

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understand the Italian mind; it is their business to keep their fingers ever on the pulse of Italian public opinion. When the servants had left the room the conversation turned, as most conversations between foreigners in Rome do turn nowadays, to Mussolini and the policies of the Fascist Government. To my surprise, every one present expressed the opinion that Italy was preparing for war. One, the representative of a frankly sensational newspaper, asserted that war would come within eighteen months. Another, the most conservative member of the group and perhaps the best informed, admitted that he expected it within five years. All were agreed, however, that war, sooner or later, was inevitable.

"But," I protested, "it's absurd for Italy to even think of going to war when she is only just beginning to recover from the last one. Besides, she has none of the essentials for waging war—no money, no coal, no oil, no iron. Nor could any territory which she might win possibly be worth what it would cost her. The very idea is fantastic."

"Of course it's fantastic," agreed one of the party, "but did you ever hear the story about the lawyer and the man who was arrested for speeding? The man sent for the lawyer to get him out of jail. 'But, my dear fellow,' said the lawyer, 'you shouldn't be here!' 'I know damn well I shouldn't be here,' replied the other, '*but I am.*' And that is Italy's case. She knows damn well that she shouldn't

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be thinking about war, but she does think about it just the same."

That Mussolini himself seriously contemplates a resort to war in order to gratify Italian territorial ambitions—unless, of course, the extremists of his own party should get out of hand—I gravely question, and this despite his jingoistic utterances and bellicose saber-rattling. For it should be kept in mind that he is an adept at the art of bluffing. He bluffed Yugoslavia into accepting the Italian annexation of Fiume; by his naval demonstration off Corfu he bluffed Greece into accepting Italy's demands; when the German chancellor voiced a protest at the attempts to Italianize the German inhabitants of South Tyrol he bluffed that worthy into a complete back-down; and he has repeatedly bluffed the League of Nations, which he is reputed to hold in contempt. Now bluffing is as clearly recognized in diplomacy as it is in poker, but in either game it involves a considerable element of risk, for there is always the possibility that an opponent may call the bluff—as Mustapha Kemal did—and demand a show-down. In such an event, Mussolini might find himself in a very embarrassing position.

There was a period, a year or two ago, when the Duce might conceivably have welcomed a war, provided it were a small one, as offering a way out of the difficulties with which he was confronted at home. But those difficulties have now been largely solved, and, moreover, he has been greatly sobered by the

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tremendous responsibilities he has shouldered, which are beginning to weigh heavily on him. Further, he is far too sane and shrewd a man not to realize how economically disastrous even a victorious war would be for Italy, which has by no means recovered from the last one. I am myself convinced that his warlike utterances are intended for the consumption of his own people rather than for the intimidation of foreign nations. For the fact should not be lost sight of that Mussolini is a dictator, and, like all dictators, has constantly to devise new gestures, to invent fresh crises, in order to excuse his dictatorship. It is this stimulation of war enthusiasm in a people naturally prone to emotion which keeps him in power. For his own security he must keep the Italians continually stirred up; he doesn't dare permit them any leisure in which to think rationally. The danger is, of course, that they may run amuck if he continues to feed them such strong stimulant.

Whether or not you approve of Mussolini's policies, whether or not you believe that Italy will benefit in the long run by his régime, you cannot in fairness withhold your admiration from him as a man. He is not only an amazing personality, one of the few really great figures of our time, but I am convinced that he will bulk even larger when history has granted him the justice of perspective.

Mussolini is an indefatigable worker, a steam-engine in boots, the office hours which he has established in the government departments having



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brought the easy-going Italian bureaucrats almost to the verge of nervous prostration. His official title of *Capo del Governo*, head of the Government, is no empty appellation, for he holds no less than seven cabinet portfolios—he is prime minister, secretary of state and minister of foreign affairs, minister of the interior, minister of war, minister of marine, minister of aëronautics, and minister of corporations—and he manages to give all these multifarious tasks his personal attention. He is also the Duce (leader) of fascismo, with all the duties and responsibilities that that position implies. Incidentally, he is a knight of the Annunziata, Italy's highest order of knighthood, and as such enjoys the rank, title, and privileges of a cousin of the king.

One of the busiest men in the world, he has nevertheless found time to acquire a working knowledge of English, which he speaks with remarkable fluency considering how little time he can devote to studying it. His teacher is a clever young Englishwoman, the Rome correspondent of an American newspaper, but the lessons are constantly interrupted by audiences, conferences, and affairs of state. French he speaks like his mother-tongue.

The Duce resembles the late Theodore Roosevelt in that he plays as strenuously as he works—he rides cross-country on the Campagna, boxes, fences, drives a racing-car at terrific speed, pilots an airplane, and plays the violin; but, owing to the tremendous pressure of official duties, his play-spells are becoming



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shorter and shorter, to the acute anxiety of his friends.

Intensely emotional, quickly reacting to the people and circumstances around him, he switches in an instant from frowns to smiles, from furies to tears. He is as tense as a fiddle-string; his enormous responsibilities, the constant mental and physical strain he is under, have made him a bundle of nerves. A newspaper correspondent who accompanied him on a recent visit to Genoa, and who stood beside him on the bridge as the flagship entered the harbor, told me that the tears streamed down the Duce's face when the great throng upon the quay burst into the thrilling strains of "Giovanezza." He can be one of the most fascinating companions imaginable or he can be brusque to the point of rudeness, according to the mood of the moment. The forbidding scowl which characterizes so many of his pictures is, as in the case of his fellow-dictator, Pilsudski, largely a pose. Dictators are expected to look ferocious, and Mussolini knows how to play the part.

His personal tastes are of the simplest. During the winter months he occupies a modest seven-room apartment in the Ludovisi quarter of Rome, though with the coming of the warm weather he moves into the magnificent villa in the Via Nomentana which has been placed at his disposal by Prince Torlonia, where he finds opportunities for exercise in the spacious, high-walled gardens. While motoring in the North he broke his journey at the Villa d'Este, the

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luxurious hotel, once a royal palace, on the Lake of Como. The Duce surveyed the marble halls, the tapestried salons, the rows of liveried servants; then, remarking dryly, "This is too fine for me," turned on his heel and went out.

Fully alive to the value of stage trappings and always ready to gratify the Latin love of display, on occasions of ceremony he delights the populace by appearing in the cocked hat and bullion-incrusted court dress to which his position as prime minister entitles him, or in the more somber but highly picturesque uniform, with its white plumed busby, which he wears when, in the rôle of *Duce del fascismo*, he reviews his Black Shirt legions. He is a born showman. In his sense of the dramatic, his ability to hold the center of the stage, his genius for entertaining the masses, he has been equaled in modern times by only two men, Theodore Roosevelt and Phineas T. Barnum.

He can be ruthless if ruthlessness is required. This was illustrated by the methods which he employed to stamp out the Mafia, the secret society of robbers, blackmailers, and assassins which terrorized Sicily for upward of a century. The Mafia enforced its demands for tribute by kidnapping, and sometimes murdering, the women relatives of its victims. Yet, curiously enough, its members were noted for their chivalrous devotion to their own womenfolk. When the Fascists came into power, Mussolini ordered a heavy force of carbineers and black-shirt

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militia to occupy the Mafia-ridden regions. A list of the society's leaders was compiled and they were ordered to come in and give themselves up. Emboldened by their belief that they were above the law, they refused, almost to a man. But it is not safe to flout the behests of Mussolini. Taking a leaf from the Mafia's own book, he promptly issued orders that the womenfolk of the leaders should be rounded up and lodged in prison. Then word was sent out that they would be held *incomunicado* until their husbands, fathers, and brothers surrendered themselves. This drastic measure was immediately effective, the dreaded society was destroyed, root and branch, and Sicily was rid of a curse under which it had groaned for generations.

According to American standards, Mussolini's domestic life is not exactly an ideal one. His wife, Donna Rachel Mussolini, makes her home in Milan and only sees her famous husband on the rare occasions when affairs of state take him to the northern metropolis, or when, still more infrequently, she visits him in the capital. His daughter Edda, a clever and vivacious girl still in her 'teens, his two sons Vittorio and Bruno, and the baby which was born in 1927, live with their mother and uncle and are being brought up under the stern discipline inculcated by fascism.

Mussolini is frankly fond of feminine society, having remarked in an interview not long ago that women were among "the pleasant parentheses" of

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life, but, though besieged by all sorts of appeals from all sorts of "parentheses," he never permits them to interfere with his work. A middle-aged and highly cultured Roman lady, Signora Margherita Sarfatti, who has written the best account of his life, is generally credited with having more influence over the dictator than any one else, and it is to her that he frequently turns in moments of weariness and perplexity for comfort and advice.

It has been rumored that a marriage will eventually be arranged between the dictator's daughter, Edda, and the Crown Prince Umberto, but this is only back-stairs gossip and should not be taken seriously.

King Victor Emmanuel doubtless realizes that he is beholden to Mussolini for his throne—for there is no doubt there was one period, during the dark days of 1921-22, when the Duce could have made himself ruler of Italy in name as well as in fact—and is probably duly grateful. But it is hard to imagine Queen Elena giving her consent to such a union, even were it seriously considered, which I doubt. Being a woman and a queen, I should guess that in her heart she does not relish the spectacle of her husband playing second fiddle in his own orchestra, and that she, at least, feels no overwhelming gratitude toward the blacksmith's son who wields the leader's baton.

Mussolini is the most closely guarded ruler in the world, the precautions which are taken to insure his safety exceeding even those which hedged the Rus-



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sian czars. His comings and goings are enveloped in the deepest secrecy; his movements are never announced in advance; the corridors and anterooms of the Palazzo Chigi swarm with plain-clothes men; at the hour when he customarily leaves his office all vehicular traffic is diverted from that section of the Corso; his summer residence at the Villa Torlonia, with its cordon of soldiers, black-shirts, carbineers, detectives, and police, presents the appearance of an armed camp. His escapes from the several attempts which have been made to assassinate him have been so miraculous that the Italians have come to believe that he bears a charmed life. His utter indifference to danger he explains by asserting his profound belief in fatalism. But perhaps, deep down in his heart, he feels that he could end his astonishing career no more fittingly or dramatically than to die as Cæsar died.

“What would happen in Italy if Mussolini should come to a sudden end?” is a question which every thinking Italian asks himself anxiously. It is commonly rumored that the Duce has made a political will and testament in which he has designated his successor, or, as some assert, a triumvirate. But the truth is that there is no one in the Fascist party who is entitled to succeed him, either by virtue of outstanding ability or personal popularity, no one who could even half-way fill his shoes. On such a subject one man’s guess is as good as another’s, and mine is that in the event of Mussolini’s death the



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present era of repression would be succeeded by one of constitutionalism, but one shorn of its former weaknesses and defects. I believe that, far from either an extremist or an anarchical régime ensuing, there would arise the cry, "The dictator is dead! Long live the king!" For there is no doubt that, in spite of Victor Emmanuel's present eclipse, the Italian people are deeply attached to their sovereign and to the house of Savoy.

Were the Duce to die in the near future, it seems to me almost certain that there would be a schism in the Fascist party, a desperate though not necessarily bloody struggle for power between the moderate elements and the extremists. The king, who has the army solidly behind him, would certainly side with the moderates, and so would the immensely powerful Roman Catholic church, which, despite its studied aloofness from politics, has given its ungrudging support to Mussolini because he has stood for law and order and because he has put an end to socialism and Freemasonry, which the Vatican has always regarded as anti-religious and pernicious influences. In fact, one of the ablest and most influential members of the Sacred College, the late Giovanni Bonzano, was known as "the Fascist cardinal."

I might mention, in this connection, that not since the overthrow of the Vatican's temporal power have the relations between church and state been as cordial as they are at present. Though Mussolini could hardly be described as a devout churchman, in all his

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dealings with the Holy See he has shown a friendliness and moderation which have won him the confidence of Catholics at home and abroad. It may be doubted whether he would ever consent to the reconstitution of anything resembling a papal state, no matter how infinitesimal territorially, but it is known that he looks with favor on the proposal to restore to the Holy See certain of the papal palaces and holdings which were confiscated by the Government in 1871. Such a compromise would have the effect of winning for fascism the support of all pious Catholics and would immensely advance the dawning friendship between church and state.

Regardless of any schisms or quarrels which might occur within the Fascist party upon the death of its leader, I do not for a moment believe that the very real achievements of fascism would be imperiled; they have brought too many blessings to the country, they are built on too solid a foundation. Were Benito Mussolini to die to-morrow his work would stand. He would not have lived in vain. His body would be enshrined in the Roman Pantheon but his spirit would live in the hearts of the Italian people, encouraging them, leading them on.

Before I met the leader of fascismo I had pictured him as a combination of Napoleon, Roosevelt, and the Kaiser, with a dash of St. Vitus thrown in. But, at least in appearance and manner, he failed utterly to meet this preconception. This does not mean, however, that I was disappointed. It was merely that, in-

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stead of finding a composite of other types, as I had expected, I found a startlingly original man.

The meeting—I can hardly call it an audience, for the Duce talked far more than he listened—had been set for six o'clock in the Palazzo Chigi, that ancient brownstone palace on the Corso which houses the Italian Foreign Office. After a brief wait in a chilly ante-chamber, crowded with officials, secretaries, a group of extremely uneasy looking Yugoslav officers in resplendent uniforms, and two or three heavy-footed individuals whom I guessed to be plain-clothes men, I was ushered into an enormous, high-ceilinged, richly somber room, its vast expanse of polished dark brown floor gleaming beneath the shaded lights. The huge apartment was conspicuously destitute of furniture. A few high-backed chairs of red and gold were ranged stiffly along the walls, and a massive center-table was laden promiscuously with bronzes, presentation caskets, and testimonials. From behind a large flat-topped desk, set in the far corner between two heavily curtained windows, a short stockily built figure rose and advanced a few paces to receive me. In acknowledgment of my bow he raised his hand, palm outward, in the dramatic gesture of the Roman legionaries which has been adopted as the Fascist salute.

A vigorous hand-clasp and I found myself seated opposite a very swarthy man who at first glance reminded me of Caruso without actually resembling him. In the somewhat weary eyes, the drawn lines of

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the face, the aggressive out-thrust jaw, the squat, powerfully muscled frame, there was a suggestion of a tired prize-fighter. Though scarcely below medium height, the Duce appears considerably shorter than he really is because of the thickness of his neck and the extraordinary breadth of his chest and shoulders. The natural swarthiness of his skin is accentuated by jowls which remain blue-black in spite of frequent shaving. His hair is so sparse in front as to verge on baldness, but this only serves to call attention to his magnificent forehead, the dome of a thinker, of a dreamer who makes his dreams come true. His deep-set singularly penetrating eyes stare at one with an intensity which is somewhat disconcerting. The frown, the stern set lips, the hand thrust into the breast of his coat, the feet planted well apart, the abrupt nervous gestures—all these are reminiscent of Napoleon. His immense physical vigor, his sharp incisiveness of speech, almost staccato at times, reminded me of Roosevelt, but I could detect in the Duce none of T. R.'s charm of manner, comparatively little of his personal magnetism.

There were no preliminary flourishes to the conversation. One of Mussolini's characteristics is his abruptness, his fashion of coming straight to the point.

"You have just come from our African colonies?" he began. "What are your impressions of them? Can they be made to pay?"

"Not as they are run at present," I told him.



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"Why not?" he demanded.

"There is too much overhead," I explained. Then, realizing that the Duce's knowledge of English might not run to such colloquialisms as "overhead," I turned to the under-secretary, Count Capasso Torre, with the request that he translate the term into Italian.

"I know what you mean," Mussolini interrupted. "There are too many officials, too many uniforms for the size of the population."

"Exactly."

"We are going to remedy that," he said grimly. "But you should remember that our North African possessions have not been pacified very long. The tribes are now subdued, however, and we estimate that in another five years Tripolitania alone will be able to take care of half a million of our surplus population."

"Are you still thinking of seeking outlets for your surplus population in Tunisia, Abyssinia, and Anatolia?" I was emboldened to ask.

The question evidently displeased him.

"How were you impressed by yesterday's Fascist demonstration?" he countered, referring to the great rally which had marked the seventh birthday of fascism.

"What do you think of our propaganda in the United States?" was his next question. "Are your people beginning to understand the aims and ideals of fascism?"



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"I think that it is unintelligently directed," I replied bluntly. "Europeans seem to think that the United States consists of a narrow strip of Atlantic seaboard—of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington. They fail to realize that the America which really counts lies west of Buffalo. It is the people of the little towns of the Middle West, the hard-headed folk on the farms, who hold the political balance of power and shape American public opinion. Yet foreign nations seldom think it worth while to attempt to win their sympathy and support."

"America is our best friend," he asserted, "yet Americans don't sympathize with fascism as they should. Why is it?"

"My people are strong for personal liberty," I replied. "It is difficult for them to understand some of the repressive measures, particularly those curtailing liberty of speech and of the press, adopted by fascism."

"That," responded the dictator emphatically, "is because they don't understand our problems. It is unfair to judge Italy by American standards."

"Moreover," I continued, "Americans have been led to believe that fascism is militaristic and imperialistic, that it believes in gaining its ends by force. The newspapers are constantly quoting men high in the Fascist party as declaring that Italy is preparing for war. Such statements naturally shake American confidence in fascism."

"Any one who makes such statements is an enemy

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to fascism and to Italy," the Duce declared, smashing his clenched fist down upon the table. "Do you know what fascism stands for?"

Just then the tinkle of his desk-telephone interrupted our conversation, and when it was resumed it drifted into other channels. But his question had been answered, at least to my own satisfaction. For lying on his desk, within reach of my hand, was a box of matches—the exasperating little wax vestas which are a product of the government monopoly. Printed in staring letters across the box-cover of red, white, and green, the national colors of Italy, was the single word: "*Italianissima*."

## CHAPTER III

### BORDERLANDS OF SLAV AND LATIN

THE Italian-Yugoslav frontier station on the main road from Trieste to Ljubljana, with its striped sentry-boxes, barbed-wire barriers, gates which look like horizontal barber-poles, fluttering flags, and soldiers, police, and customs officials in various uniforms, is all that a gateway to the Balkans should be from a picturesque point of view. On the Italian side of the border were sun-bronzed Alpini, whose gray-green uniforms and slouch hats with eagle-feathers slanting jauntily from the brim made them look so much like the chorus of "Robin Hood" that one half expected them to burst into "Brown October Ale," and stern-featured carabinieri whose swallowtail coats and cocked hats were reminiscent of Napoleon. The soldiers on the other side, though not less numerous, were considerably less showy in their serviceable, business-like uniforms of khaki or dark green.

I wonder why the European Governments, now that the war is over, do not take steps to get rid of the red tape which makes international travel a chore rather than a pleasure, for it wastes an enor-

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mous amount of time, it involves the employment of a vast number of officials, it tends to discourage travel and slow up business, and it creates needless irritation. During the war visas were of course necessary, but they are necessary no longer, as has been proved by Belgium and Switzerland, which do not require them, and by Germany, Denmark, and Sweden, which grant them without charge. The Governments which still demand them insist that visas are necessary in order to check the movements of undesirables, particularly Communists, from one country to another, but experience has shown that persons who are really dangerous usually obtain them anyway.

The fees charged Americans for visas constitute a serious burden in many cases. When, during the war, the Government at Washington raised the visa fee for foreigners to ten dollars the European Governments promptly retaliated, so that an American traveler has to pay several times more for the privilege of spending his money abroad than do the nationals of other states. Doubtless because they hoped to obtain favorable publicity, the Governments of all save one of the twenty-odd countries which we visited gave us visas gratis, but had I been traveling for pleasure the cost of obtaining the necessary visas for our three passports would have amounted to something over six hundred dollars, which is quite a sum. The action of the American Government has made it particularly hard for those







#### A REMINDER OF THE TURK

Most of the Bosnian towns are still half-oriental, the unpainted, overhanging houses, through whose latticed windows furtively peer the prisoners of the harem, reminding one that this land was under Turkish rule until very recent years

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of its citizens who, in making a trip abroad, are compelled to practise the utmost economy. For example, I met several school-teachers and students, persons of very slender means, who told me that the stamps on their passports had cost them almost as much as a second-class ticket across the Atlantic. From the standpoint of the American Government, which is the richest on earth, excessive visa fees are wholly unnecessary; from the standpoint of the European nations, who need American tourists, such retaliation seems short-sighted and unwise.

Yugoslavia, or the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, to give it its official name, does not recognize international triptychs—or did not in 1927—and insists that those desiring to cross its borders by motor shall obtain special authorization from the authorities at Belgrade. I did not learn this, however, until our arrival in Trieste, where I was informed that it would take about a week to obtain permission to take my car into Yugoslav territory. As I had no desire to spend any such length of time in that uninteresting city, I decided to take a chance on getting through and accordingly pushed on, for, being provided with every conceivable sort of document, including an invitation from the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I did not anticipate any serious difficulties.

There was a comparatively brief delay on the Italian side of the frontier while the carbineers examined our papers, but when the Yugoslav officials dis-

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covered that I did not possess a special authorization for the car they were politely adamant. When I showed them my invitation from the Foreign Office they assured us that we were very welcome in the country and blandly suggested that we leave the car and continue our journey by train. It looked as though we would have to return to Trieste, in which case I planned to strike northward for the Austrian border, when a tall young man in knickerbockers intervened.

“I am the secretary of the Ljubljana Automobile Club,” he said in faultless English—I learned later that he had been educated in Chicago—“and have come down to assist a caravan of German motorists to cross the frontier. By good luck I brought one more triptych than was needed, and you are welcome to it. If you will step over to the custom-house with me we will fill it out.”

To this somewhat informal arrangement the frontier functionaries made no objections, for a triptych is a triptych after all, so thirty minutes later, the formalities having been complied with to every one's satisfaction, the striped pole which barred our way was raised and we rolled across a surveyor's line upon Yugoslavian soil.

We had an amusing experience during the short run from the frontier to Ljubljana, which is the capital of Slovenia. Every one seemed to be expecting us. The men whom we passed along the road raised their hats in greeting, the women waved their handker-

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chiefs, and we were pelted with flowers by the children. In one hamlet the youngsters, assembled before their school, sang what I assumed to be the Yugoslav national anthem, and at the entrance to another village there was a rude evergreen arch bearing the Slav equivalent of "Welcome." By the time we reached Ljubljana the car was half filled with the flowers that had been tossed into it. At the outskirts of that city, which is a place of considerable size, a boy scout mounted on a bicycle guided us to the principal hotel, the police on duty at the street intersections saluting and holding back the traffic until we had passed.

"These Yugoslavs are certainly the most hospitable people I have ever met," exclaimed my wife. "I knew that they were grateful for the help America gave them after the war, and for President Wilson's support in the dispute over Fiume, but I never expected a reception like this. But what I can't figure out is how they knew that we were coming."

The mystery was explained, however, by the manager of the hotel, who remarked that he could not offer us very comfortable rooms because a large party of German motorists, traveling in fifty cars, had arrived just ahead of us. They had come down from Berlin, he said, on what we in America would call a "sociability run," being the first delegation of German motorists to visit Yugoslavia since the war.

"We thought," my daughter remarked caustically, "that they were handing us bouquets because we are



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Americans, but it seems that they were doing it because they thought we were Germans!"

However remote the danger of an armed collision between Italy and Yugoslavia, there is no mistaking the atmosphere of uneasiness and apprehension in the latter country. The manager of the hotel in Ljubljana—the former Laibach—assured me that he never looked out of his window in the morning without expecting to see a squadron of Italian bombing planes in the western sky, though it should be mentioned that the situation was particularly acute at the time of our visit as a result of the controversy over Albania. Much more significant was the assertion of one of the leading business men of Zagreb, well informed and anything but an alarmist, who expressed the conviction that war would come within three years unless Italy abandoned her provocative Balkan policy. It is the business of diplomats to deride such rumors, yet I happen to know that in the early summer of 1927 the situation was so alarming that the Italian minister at Belgrade inquired of the American minister, Dr. Prince, whether the United States would assume charge of Italian affairs in Yugoslavia in the event that diplomatic relations were broken.

It takes two to make a war, and the Yugoslavs will put up with many humiliations before they will resort to arms, for they are poor, ill-equipped, and war-weary, but there is always a limit to the patience of any people. They are by no means blind to the im-





"Onward, Christian Soldiers!" On Sundays and holidays the roads of Slovakia are filled with these picturesque religious processions, headed for hilltop shrines or other places of pilgrimage



Madonnas of the Meadows. The women, in their snowy coifs and flowing garments, with the bright green fields for a background, remind one of the figures in the stained-glass windows of churches

EASTER ON THE SLOVAK COUNTRY-SIDE



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minence of the danger, however, and for some time past have been straining every effort to remedy their military deficiencies. That they would be by no means helpless in the event of such a struggle is shown by the fact that France, which concluded a treaty with the Yugoslavs in November, 1927, has been purchasing large quantities of munitions in Germany against her reparation account and has been shipping them into Yugoslavia by the train-load.

Because of Italy's immense superiority in military, naval, and aërial strength, most people assume that in the event of a conflict with Yugoslavia the result would be a foregone conclusion. With this opinion I do not altogether agree. Italy, it is true, could probably mobilize at least two million men, whereas it is doubtful if Yugoslavia could place in the field half that number. Italy will soon have, if she has not already, the strongest air force in the world, while Yugoslavia's aërial defense is negligible. On the other hand, few countries are protected by nature in the way that Yugoslavia is protected on the west by the formidable barrier of the Dinaric Alps and on the south by the Balkan mountains, these two ranges not only affording a defense against an Italian invasion by land, but also protecting her, to a great extent, from attack by air.

If war should come, most of the foreign military attachés in Belgrade are of the opinion that the main theater of operations would not be along the

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short and highly mountainous frontier between the Austrian border and Fiume, which could be easily defended, but that Italy would seek, by means of a feint, to immobilize a considerable portion of the Yugoslav army along this front and would make her real thrust through Albania, which is already an Italian protectorate in everything save name. It is worthy of note, in this connection, that the Italians have greatly enlarged and strengthened their bases at Brindisi and Otranto, which are separated by barely fifty miles of sea from the Albanian port of Valona, which has an excellent harbor. Those with whom I discussed the subject advanced the theory that Italy would take as her immediate objectives Monastir and Uskub, in southern Serbia, thereby obtaining control of the railway which runs through the valley of the Vardar to Saloniki, Yugoslavia's only means of obtaining supplies from the South. But whether the Italians, for all their superiority in wealth and man-power, could prosecute such a campaign successfully is open to grave question. They could bombard and occupy the Adriatic coast towns, which are of no great strategic value, and they could do a certain amount of damage to the inland cities with their airplanes, but that would not be enough. The Yugoslavs have repeatedly shown that they are courageous and tenacious fighters, who do not know when they are whipped, and their country, with its mountain barriers, its narrow defiles, its lack of communications, and its utter inability to support an in-

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vading army, might well prove a nut too hard to crack.

It is inconceivable that such a war could be localized. The interests or ambitions of far too many other nations would be involved; it would provide too many tempting opportunities for revenge. Were the Bulgarians, who are in a constant state of irritation with the Serbs over the Macedonian question, to join forces with Italy and attack Yugoslavia on the flank, the latter's position would be desperate indeed. But in such an event Rumania, as a member of the Little Entente, would almost certainly declare war on Bulgaria, whereupon Russia would see her chance to recover Bessarabia. Even Hungary might be tempted to throw caution to the winds and attempt to get Transylvania back again. And any move on Hungary's part would inevitably bring Czechoslovakia in. In fact, it needs but the slightest push to send the whole political structure of Central Europe toppling like a house of cards.

Of this the statesmen in Rome and Belgrade are perfectly aware, and I do not believe for a moment that, if they can prevent it, they will permit such a catastrophe to happen. The danger is, of course, that a conflict may be precipitated by some incident which they cannot foresee, over which they have no control, for the friction between the two countries is very real and does not appear to be diminishing. It is my opinion that France's support of Yugoslavia has increased rather than lessened the chances of



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trouble, for it has had the double effect of stiffening the backs of the Yugoslavs and of still further embittering the Italians, who, as I have said in the preceding chapter, see in France their greatest enemy, the chief obstacle to the realization of their ambitions in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. I am convinced, indeed, that the friction between the two great Latin nations constitutes the most serious menace to the peace of the world to-day.

Many observers believe, and with considerable justification, that it needs a foreign war to make the various branches of the Yugoslav race which comprise the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes sink their domestic differences and become a truly united nation. As a consequence of the selfish and short-sighted policy pursued by the politicians in Belgrade, the country is at present divided into two camps which heartily dislike and distrust each other, the main issue being centralism versus federalism. The reins of government are in the hands of the Serbs, by which is meant the inhabitants of pre-war Serbia, who number perhaps four millions. Opposed to these are the peoples of the former Austro-Hungarian provinces—Croatia, Slavonia, Slovenia, Vojvodina, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina—and of Montenegro, who, on being promised the status of autonomous entities within the framework of a federal state, voluntarily united with Serbia in 1918. Though reliable figures are almost impossible to obtain, the non-Serbs of the kingdom probably num-

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ber eight millions. With a Serbian king on the throne, Serbs holding most of the cabinet portfolios and other important positions in the Government, the army completely under Serbian control (only Serbs may hold commissions above the grade of colonel), Serb troops garrisoning the towns of Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, and Montenegro, and with the administration centralized in the Serb capital, it will be seen that the Serb tail wags the Yugoslav dog.

The arrogance of the Serbs, their attempts to create a "Greater Serbia" instead of the federalized state to which they were committed, and the repressive measures which they have employed to gain their ends—all these have resulted, as might have been expected, in arousing the bitter resentment of the western Yugoslavs, who feel that they are being treated as conquered peoples rather than as copartners. The traveler in that part of Yugoslavia lying between the Adriatic and the Save does not need to keep his ear to the ground to hear the ominous rumblings of discontent; he requires no exceptional powers of observation to detect the signs of approaching trouble.

The distinctions between the Serbs and the western branches of the Yugoslav family are cultural, religious, and to a less extent linguistic. The former use a modified form of the Cyrillic alphabet; the latter the Latin. The Serbs belong to the Greek Orthodox communion; the Croats and Slovenes are

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Roman Catholics; many of the Bosnians are Moslems. Taking the country as a whole, the Catholic and Mohammedan populations together outnumber the Orthodox by about half a million.

The main difference between the eastern and western branches, however, is a cultural one, the result of thirteen centuries of separation. The western Yugoslavs, by which is meant the inhabitants of Croatia, Slavonia, and Slovenia, show the effects of the Latin and Germanic cultures by which they were influenced so long, whereas the Serbs, who did not acquire their independence from Turkey until 1878, are still a peasant people, for the most part tillers of the soil and raisers of cattle, sturdy, stolid, crude in manner, largely illiterate, unprogressive, and not particularly industrious. It might be said, indeed, that the Save, long the frontier between Croatia-Slavonia and Serbia, still forms the dividing line between the West and the East. On one side lies a country of prosperous farmsteads, dotted with modern, well-kept towns and cities, crisscrossed with well-built roads and excellent railways; on the other are squalid communities, clusters of miserable huts, execrable roads, and one of the poorest and most backward populations in Europe.

Alexander I, the king of the Serb-Croat-Slovene state, is a serious, intelligent, hard-working, rather shy young man, who is at heart thoroughly democratic and who might make himself popular with his new subjects if he would show himself among them

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more frequently, for he has a modest and winning personality. Whether due to his own shyness or to the advice of his ministers, I do not know, but he rarely visits the non-Serb portions of his kingdom, and as a consequence the majority of his subjects have never so much as set eyes upon him. Until, in 1922, he married the Princess Marie, second daughter of the late King Ferdinand and Queen Marie of Rumania, he led an extremely lonely and circumscribed existence, being hedged about by ministers and advisers and being permitted few companions of his own age. Queen Marie of Yugoslavia, whom I knew before her marriage as a plump, rather hoydenish young girl whom her parents nicknamed "Fatty," is an admirable foil to her studious and sedate husband, but she is rather handicapped than otherwise by having for her mother the ubiquitous Marie of Rumania, whose political machinations the Yugoslavs view with some suspicion.

Zagreb (formerly known as Agram), the capital of Croatia-Slavonia and the second largest city in the kingdom, is the center of western Yugoslav culture. It is as clean and attractive a place as you will find in Europe, with broad asphalted boulevards, imposing public buildings, a hotel which would do credit to a city four times its size, and one of the loveliest parks I have ever seen. Its numerous squares and pleasant promenades are planted with shade trees and adorned with statues, several of the latter in the somewhat depressing style of the fa-



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mous Slav sculptor, Ivan Mestrovic, whose studio stands on a hill above the town. In its galleries are to be seen numerous examples of the work of the modern Slav painters over which art critics enthuse, though I must confess that in my case they aroused no great enthusiasm; but the museum contains a unique collection of costumes and examples of native handicraft and should on no account be missed. Zagreb is peculiarly fortunate in its setting, the slopes which rise from the north bank of the Save, mantled with vineyards and dotted with white-walled country houses set in leafy gardens, culminating in the beautiful stretches of Alpine pasture known as the Zagorje, or "land beyond the hills."

We had originally intended to push straight on from Zagreb to Belgrade, but reports of heavy inundations farther down the valley of the Save and the insistence of friends that we must not fail to see the superb mountain scenery of Bosnia and the Herzegovina induced us to change our plans. Accordingly we turned the car southward instead of eastward, a run of a hundred miles or so over extremely indifferent roads bringing us into the heart of the highlands known as the Pljesevica Planina, a lofty, densely forested plateau which overlooks the valley of the Una.

It was early spring and we were the only guests at the little hostelry at Plitvice, whose windows command a panorama of mountain, lake, and stream unsurpassed in all the world for beauty, variety, and







In Serajevo, on June 28, 1914, Bosnian conspirators of Serb nationality assassinated the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife, thereby precipitating the Great War



The East and the West meet in the Bosnian capital, telegraph poles rising beside Moslem minarets and electric tram-cars clanging their way through bazaars teeming with men in turbans and tarbooshes

WHERE THE GREATEST WAR IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD BEGAN

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grandeur—and thirty years of travel have given me a basis for comparison. Were it better known, nearer to the main routes of tourist travel, this Balkan wonderland would attract tens of thousands of visitors each year and would be dotted with restaurants, places of amusement, and summer hotels. But, fortunately for those who prefer the works of nature before they have been touched up by the hand of man, it remains little visited and quite unspoiled.

Here a hundred or more streams, rising in the fastnesses of the Dinaric Alps, unexpectedly emerge from leafy glens to plunge in gleaming cascades and shimmering cataracts, from fifty to two hundred feet in height, into a chain of forest-girt lakes, blue as sapphires and upward of a dozen in number, the waters of which, swirling tumultuously through a narrow, rock-walled chasm, hurtle over a final and tremendous precipice to find peace in the tranquil reaches of the Una. I, who have looked upon all, or nearly all, of the wonder-spots which the world has to offer, give you my word that the Pljesevica Planina is well worth making a pilgrimage across Europe to see.

By making an early start from Plitvice we had hoped to reach Serajevo the same evening, but the roads of Bosnia were strewn for miles on end with flinty stones which gashed our tires like knives and caused several blow-outs, so that nightfall found us only as far as Jajce, a dirty, picturesque, half-Oriental town whose ramshackle wooden houses cling

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precariously to the precipitous slopes above the Vrbas. There is only one hotel in Jajce and I cannot recommend it. During the war it was used as a club by the Austrian officers, and later as a hospital, having been only recently converted into a lodging-place for travelers. I paid for a room to myself, but I speedily discovered that I was sharing it with numerous other occupants, whose protests against my intrusion were so biting that I eventually surrendered the bed to them and spent a sleepless night on the floor. Had they had an insect Foch to organize and lead them they would have forced me to evacuate the room altogether.

The road from Jajce to Serajevo leads over the main range of the Dinaric Alps, which here attain an altitude of 7500 feet. The highway, built by Austrian military engineers, climbs the rocky slopes in a bewilderment of loops and spirals, only to drop down the other side in a terrifying series of horse-shoe curves and hairpin turns. Generally speaking, the road is safe enough if your brakes are in good order and reasonable caution is exercised, but there are a number of places where it dwindles to a mere shelf hewn from the face of the cliff, so narrow that at times one's outer wheels are on the precipice's very brink, "with a drop into nothing below you as straight as a beggar can spit."

Serajevo, "the city of palaces," which in Turkish days was referred to not inaptly as "the Damascus of the North," spreads itself over a narrow valley

## BORDERLANDS OF SLAV AND LATIN

which is closed on the east by a semicircle of rugged hills. Though the Bosnian capital is still half Oriental, and wholly beautiful, with its teeming colorful bazaars, its fivescore mosques whose slender minarets rise skyward like fingers pointing toward heaven, its unpainted, weather-beaten houses through whose mysterious latticed windows peer the prisoners of the harem, its somber cypress groves and weed-grown Turkish cemeteries with their turban-surmounted tombstones, it is being gradually rebuilt in western fashion, more's the pity.

Its Moslem inhabitants have not been so completely Europeanized as to have lost their religious fanaticism, however, for when I indiscreetly attempted to photograph a venerable green-turbaned molla as he was entering the great mosque he flew at me in a maniacal rage, brandishing his steel-shod staff and screaming Koranic curses. Had it not been for the prompt interference of the gendarmes the episode would have provoked a religious riot, for the men in hats took my part and the men in fezes took his, there being no love lost between King Alexander's Christian and Moslem subjects.

The stormy history of Serajevo goes back to the Dark Ages and beyond, yet the darkest deed it has witnessed occurred on June 28, 1914, when the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated while driving through the city streets by Bosnian conspirators of Serbian nationality. What an unforgettable scene it must have been when the



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imperial motor-car, surrounded by a cloud of galloping cavalry, its lifeless occupants sunk upon the blood-soaked cushions, tore at headlong speed past the crowds of dazed onlookers to the palace! The Austrians marked the spot where the tragedy occurred by a plate set in the pavement, but it proved an embarrassing reminder to the Yugoslav Government, which ordered its removal. Though the Serbs unofficially regard the assassins as heroes and martyrs, it may be doubted whether their spirits rest in peace, for by their murderous act they precipitated a conflict which strewn the world with graves and to millions of homes brought untold anguish.

The road from Serajevo to the east runs through a wild and sparsely populated country, a region of dark forests, frowning mountains, and gloomy defiles in which almost anything might happen. Because of the activities of a band of outlaws under a bandit chieftain who, if the stories told us were to be believed, was a sort of Bosnian Robin Hood, we had been warned not to motor after nightfall, so when on one or two occasions darkness overtook us in the mountains it was distinctly comforting to feel the heavy automatic which lay beside me on the seat. We were, it is true, in a remote and lonely land, whose semi-savage inhabitants have scarcely more than a nodding acquaintance with law and order, yet we found them uniformly kind, hospitable, and obliging. For the life of me I have never been able to understand why a man, merely because his lan-



This corpulent lady, being a Christian, did not object in the least to having her picture taken



But the bearded and be-turbaned Moslem looked at the camera askance

WHERE WOMEN WEAR TROUSERS AND MEN WEAR SKIRTS



## BORDERLANDS OF SLAV AND LATIN

guage and garments are different from our own and his skin is darker, should so often be regarded with suspicion. In an experience which has covered most of the globe I have found a warmer welcome in cottages than in castles, kinder hearts under peasant jackets than under evening waistcoats.

This reminds me of an amusing incident which occurred midway between Serajevo and Belgrade. While traversing a particularly atrocious stretch of road one of my front tires, cut to ribbons by the sharp rocks, blew out with a loud bang. I jacked up the car and attempted to remove the wire wheel, but it was frozen from lack of grease and could not be budged. It was a Sunday morning, we were in one of the remotest regions in Europe, and the countryside was apparently deserted. After an hour of sweating and discouragement, I was on the point of abandoning my efforts and setting off in quest of help—in spite of the fact that my wife and daughter did not relish being left alone in so wild a region, it seemed the only thing to do under the circumstances—when over the hill came a trio of peasants clad in the embroidered jackets, scarlet sashes, and braided white felt breeches which form the Sunday-go-to-meeting costume of rural Bosnia. Knowing no Bosnian, I tried the next best thing and addressed them in my most fluent German, which grammatically is nothing to be proud of. I tried to make them understand that I needed a mechanic, but they shook their heads uncomprehendingly.

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"It's no use," said my daughter impatiently. "They don't understand a word you say. You're only wasting your breath."

"Ay spik English, mister," one of them volunteered. "Before the war Ay work in rubber fac'try in Akron."

I was as astounded as though a native of New Guinea had suddenly addressed me in my own tongue.

"Do you," I demanded, "know anything about cars?"

"You betcha," was the answer. "Ay know all 'bout them. When Ay live in Akron I own a Ford."

"Then perhaps you can help me to get this wheel off," I suggested. "I can't budge it an inch."

"You betcha," he assured me confidently. "Mister, you jus' leave him to me. Me an' these fellahs here fix him up quick. That my house over there," indicating a thatched hut some distance away. "You go to pump, mister, an' wash up."

Not at all loath to be relieved of a task which I detest, and glad of an opportunity to remove the dust with which I was caked, I followed his advice. But it was well that I returned when I did. Despite the protests of my wife and daughter that it was only the wheel which needed loosening, the one-time Akronian and his friends had proceeded with great enthusiasm to get at the seat of the trouble by dismantling the entire front end of the car. When I reappeared they had already removed the front



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bumper, unbolted one of the fenders, and were setting to work on the hood. And when, in order to save the car from being transformed into a heap of spare parts, I peremptorily interfered, they became deeply offended at my lack of gratitude, put on their coats, and stalked haughtily away. Thus abandoned, I suppose that we should have been there still had not the local blacksmith come along just then—he likewise had been in America and spoke a little English—and between us we succeeded in changing wheels and replacing the bumper. It seemed that he had been a steel-worker in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, but had returned to his native land upon the outbreak of the war, since when he had never been able to get enough money together to go to America again. When he learned that we were Amerikanskis he not only refused to accept any payment for his services but urged us to go with him to his home for dinner.

Shortly before reaching Belgrade, where it joins the Danube, the Save doubles on itself in a hairpin bend, which makes it necessary to twice cross the river by ferry. Even in dry weather it is not easy to get a large and heavily laden car aboard one of these ferries, which in many cases are scarcely more than rafts, but after heavy rains, when the river is high and the banks deep in mud, it is a trying and sometimes hazardous undertaking. Most of the ferries in the Balkans are propelled by man-power. The system is as simple as it is ingenious. A wire cable, stretched from bank to bank, runs through guides

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affixed to either end of the craft. The ferryman, who is of necessity a husky fellow, wears about his waist a sort of surcingle, to which is attached a short length of chain. Standing at the bow of the boat, with a quick twist of the wrist he flicks this chain about the cable and then trudges aft along a cleated runway, the strain thus applied serving to propel the ferry in the opposite direction. On the upper Danube, however, and later on in the Baltic states, we found several ferries where a less laborious and even more ingenious system was employed, the cable being looped about a crudely constructed revolving drum, propulsion being effected by the current itself.

Though a fine bridge was being built across the Save to Belgrade, it had not been completed when we were there in 1927, and, as the larger boats were not in operation owing to the unusually heavy inundations, we were compelled to make our third crossing of the river on positively the worst ferry I have ever seen, the scow, which was driven by a small motor, threatening to fall apart at every revolution of the propeller. This, and the insolence of the customs officials, did not tend to make us like Belgrade. Serbia is now a part of Yugoslavia, and just why the traveler who has already passed the customs at the Yugoslav frontier should have to submit to a second examination upon entering Serbian territory—in our case at Belgrade—it is hard to explain. It is evidently one of those irritating and needless formalities to which the Serbs are prone, for after we





FERRIES

Crossing the Danube in Southern Hungary

## BORDERLANDS OF SLAV AND LATIN

had been kept waiting for upward of an hour in front of the customs shed in the broiling sun, an official curtly told us to go on. It may be that the Serbs do not care whether visitors like or dislike their country, but the universal lack of courtesy on the part of the officials does not predispose the traveler in Serbia's favor. This is not a fair way to judge a country, perhaps, but it is a perfectly natural one. A household may usually be gaged by the manner of the servant who opens the front door.

One's like or dislike of a city, as of an individual, is usually due to first impressions, and my first impressions of Belgrade were obtained on a June morning, a quarter of a century ago, when the hacked and bullet-pierced bodies of King Alexander and Queen Draga lay sprawled on the lawn beneath the windows of the Old Konak, from whose windows they had been thrown by their murderers. The Old Konak has since been razed to the ground because of its tragic associations, but the picture of that ghastly early morning scene is etched sharp and clear on my memory.

The history of the Serbs has always been turbulent and bloody, the long series of civil wars, popular risings, court revolutions, dethronements, and assassinations having served to give the country, and the Balkans as a whole, a bad name. Some of these have been due to the struggle for power of rival dynasties; others to the conflicts between those in favor of centralization and those opposed to it,



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not greatly dissimilar to the struggle between the Serbs and the western Yugoslavs which is now going on. Of the eight sovereigns who have ruled in Serbia between 1830, when the country became an autonomous state, and the accession in 1903 of King Peter, only one died peacefully on the throne, and his reign lasted only a few months. Prince Milosh, the founder of the Obrenovich dynasty, who freed Serbia from the Turkish yoke, was forced to abdicate and leave the country in 1839. His elder son, Obrenovich II, died a few months after his succession. The latter's younger brother, Obrenovich III, was driven into exile, recalled, and assassinated. Alexander Karageorgevich was dethroned. Obrenovich IV abdicated after an attempt had been made to assassinate him. His son, Alexander Obrenovich, and the latter's wife, Draga Mashin, who had been a lady-in-waiting to the queen-mother, were murdered in 1903.

Serbian political conspirators, incidentally, were responsible for the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria and his wife at Serajevo in 1914. Peter I died while still nominally king, though in 1914 ill-health had forced him to intrust the regency to his second son, Alexander, the present king, the latter's elder brother, the Crown Prince George, having been forced to renounce his rights of succession. In 1916, while he was at the front, an attempt was made to assassinate the present sovereign. For this nine Serbian officers were

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sentenced to death, including the notorious Colonel Dimitrijević, who is generally credited with having had a hand in the murder of Francis Ferdinand. This is a sinister record for any state, even a Latin-American one, and patriotic Serbs regard it with regret and shame. Political conditions in Serbia have taken a decided change for the better since the war, however; the violent party strife which long absorbed the best energies of the country and paralyzed every serious and productive work has almost completely ceased, and the nation as a whole appears to be earnestly striving to better its domestic condition. The friction with the Croats and Slovenes, to which I have already referred, is not really due to the Serbs themselves, who desire to be on friendly terms with their new partners, but to the machinations of Serb politicians. They are the curse of the country and always have been. "The best thing that could happen to Serbia," a diplomat in Belgrade remarked to me not long ago, "would be for the decent elements to take out the politicians and hang them."

Though the population of Belgrade has nearly doubled since the war, and though new buildings are going up everywhere, the city remains surprisingly crude, being more suggestive of a Texas oil town than of a European capital. Miserable shacks and dilapidated wooden houses rub shoulders with modern steel and concrete structures; from the squalid and insanitary districts along the river front an assortment of stenches rises to heaven; though asphalt

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

has been laid in a few of the principal thoroughfares, most of the streets are still paved with enormous cobbles, being as rough and noisy as they were in Turkish times. Steps are being taken to give the city a modern water system, but to drink the city water as it is at present is to flirt with typhoid. Several new hotels have been opened since the war, but they, like the restaurants of the better class, are extremely expensive. Due to the exorbitant charge for gasoline—about a dollar a gallon—and to the wear and tear caused by the atrocious pavements, the tariff for taxicabs is the highest in Europe. All these things will doubtless remedy themselves as time goes on and the country becomes more affluent, but at present the contrast between Belgrade and the cities of western Yugoslavia—Zagreb, for example—is as striking as the contrast between the two principal peoples of the Yugoslav state and serves to emphasize their wide divergence in culture, customs, and traditions.

The police force of Belgrade is composed of strapping, fine-looking fellows recruited, for political reasons, from the Macedonian provinces—the *bashi-bazouks*, as it were, of modern Serbia. I was told by a foreign military attaché, and the story was confirmed by others, that the methods employed by the police in their treatment of political prisoners are mediæval in their barbarism. When a man's political activities make him obnoxious to those in power he is arrested on a trumped-up charge and thrown into

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prison. If it is deemed desirable to remove him altogether, he is strapped to a plank which is stood upright and then permitted to fall with a crash upon the stone floor of the prison. It requires only a few such treatments to rupture the blood vessels of the victim, thereby causing his death without leaving on the body any marks suggestive of violence which might lead to an embarrassing judicial investigation.

It is somewhat surprising that the Serbs should be on better terms with the Hungarians than with any of their other immediate neighbors, and this in spite of the fact that they profited enormously by Hungary's dismemberment. In Belgrade one rarely hears the denunciations of the Hungarians which in Prague and Bucharest are inevitable in every political discussion. This is due to the respect which the Magyars and the Serbs, different as they are, have for each other. The Hungarian will tell you that the Serb, whatever his other shortcomings, is a good fighter and an honest man. The Serb, speaking of the Hungarian, says the same thing. Moreover, the Hungarian inhabitants of the territories awarded to Yugoslavia by the peace treaty are being well treated so far as I could ascertain. For Rumania, however, the Serbs have ill-concealed contempt, and this in spite of the political and dynastic alliances between the two countries. It was a Serb officer, the medal-ribbons on his breast indicating that he was a veteran of all the Balkan campaigns, who remarked sneeringly, in answer to my questions about



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Rumania's military efficiency, that not much could be expected of an army whose officers used cosmetics.

The relations between the Serbs and the Bulgarians are anything but satisfactory, and more than once since the war have been strained almost to the breaking-point. It might be supposed that these peoples, representing two branches of the Slav race and both speaking forms of the Slavonic tongue, would compose their differences and settle down in amity, but such a supposition fails to take into account the constant irritant supplied by Macedonia. Bulgaria has always claimed Macedonia, since 1911 she has fought thrice for it, and the region admittedly contains a large Bulgarian population. Bulgaria's legitimate claims were brushed aside, however, by the peace settlement of 1919, whereby Macedonia was divided between Greece and Yugoslavia—the cession of the Caribrod salient brought Sofia within range of Serbian guns—Bulgaria being excluded alike from Macedonia and the *Ægean*. But that the Bulgarians will permanently acquiesce in that arrangement may be doubted, for to them Macedonia is still “the promised land.”

The situation would be far less acute, however, if in the treatment of the Bulgarians in their new Macedonian territories the Yugoslavs and Greeks would employ milder and more conciliatory measures. On the contrary, Bulgarian churches and schools have been suppressed, every effort has been made to stamp out the Bulgarian tongue and sense



## BORDERLANDS OF SLAV AND LATIN

of nationality, and thousands of Bulgarian Macedonians, homeless and impoverished, have had to seek refuge in Bulgarian territory. To protect those who remained, armed bands of *comitadjis* have conducted an exasperating guerrilla warfare against the Serbs and Greeks, wrecking trains, blowing up bridges, burning villages, and effecting other reprisals. In reply to repeated protests from Belgrade and Athens, the Bulgarian Government replies that it cannot prevent the passage of these bands across its frontier because it is unable to recruit a sufficiently strong force under the terms of the treaty of Neuilly, which provides that service in the ranks of the Bulgarian army must be for a period of not less than twelve years.

Further, it must be borne in mind that a large fraction of the population of Bulgaria is of Macedonian origin, and that this fraction exercises a very considerable influence on Bulgarian politics. The Macedonians in Bulgaria are well organized, many of them are men of exceptional ability, and there has generally been at least one Macedonian minister in the Bulgarian cabinet. These exiles cannot reconcile themselves to the partition of their motherland, they flame with indignation at the tales of injustice and oppression suffered by their brethren, and, until Serbia and Greece realize the wisdom of treating the Bulgarians of Macedonia fairly, there will be a sense of injustice and resentment in Bulgaria which must strengthen the hands of the ex-

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tremists. The Bulgarians are further embittered against the Serbs by their belief that the latter have blocked Bulgaria's attempts to obtain an economic outlet to the Ægean. This was guaranteed them by Article 48 of the treaty of Neuilly, but, like so many of the other pledges made by the allies, the promise has not been kept. This is understood to be due in part to Serbian opposition, for the Serbs themselves are cut off from the Ægean by a narrow strip of Greek territory, and it may be assumed that they will not permit Bulgaria, if they can help it, to obtain that access to the warm water which they are denied. Be this as it may, there can be no hope of friendly relations between the Serbs and the Bulgarians until the Macedonian question has been settled to the reasonable satisfaction of the latter, who demand that the rights of the Bulgarian minorities be respected and that the region be granted autonomy in some form. Menaced on the west by a powerful and aggressive Italy, it would seem the part of wisdom for Yugoslavia to effect a reconciliation with her neighbor on the southeast, even though such a reconciliation involved a modification of the present frontiers, for, in the event of an Italian-Yugoslav war, the Bulgarians, in their present frame of mind, would be a discomfiting folk to have at the back door.

If Yugoslavia is confronted by an irritating situation in Macedonia, she has even graver troubles on her hands in the Albanian question, for, whereas



LIKE FINGERS POINTING TOWARD HEAVEN

The towns of Slovakia are redeemed from drabness by the quaint and graceful lines of their church spires. Banska Bystrica is not a large place, but it has three fine churches in a row, with a religious monument thrown in



## BORDERLANDS OF SLAV AND LATIN

Bulgaria is disarmed and helpless, behind Albania is the might of Italy.

Albania is a highly mountainous and undeveloped country about the size of New Hampshire and Vermont combined; three quarters of its population are Mohammedans. It proclaimed its independence in 1912, being the last of the Balkan states to throw off the Turkish yoke, and invited Prince William of Wied to rule it. He accepted and arrived at Durazzo in March, 1914, but his reign was of short duration, for he and his entourage fled upon the outbreak of the World War, whereupon Albania fell into a state of anarchy. Shortly thereafter the port of Valona was occupied by Italian troops, which, after Italy's entry into the war, took possession of all southern Albania, thereby effecting a junction with the French army pushing north from Saloniki. After the flight of Prince William, Albania remained for a time without a government worthy of the name, but in June, 1917, the general in command of the Italian forces reëstablished a national administration and in 1925 a republic was proclaimed.

Since the end of the war the internal situation of Albania has been chaotic, government succeeding government in rapid succession. To further complicate matters, Yugoslavia laid claim to and occupied the northern portion of the country, and it was only after pressure had been brought to bear by the great powers that the Yugoslav troops were reluctantly withdrawn. Yugoslavia has by no means abandoned



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her claims, however, and it is these claims which form the bone of contention with Italy, for the latter is determined that Yugoslavia shall push no farther down the Adriatic, and she has use for a nominally independent Albania in imperialistic schemes of her own. By turning to the map you will see at a glance why the interests and ambitions of Italy and Yugoslavia clash in this region. The possession of Albania would give the southern Serbs an outlet to the Adriatic and would end forever the Italian dream of making that sea a *mare clausum*. The Italians, on the other hand, desire control of Albania—whether as an out-and-out protectorate or as a nominal republic under Italian ægis is immaterial to them—because it would afford them an ideal gateway for a commercial, and if need be for a military, penetration of the Balkans, which they regard as within their sphere of influence. Though the Governments of both kingdoms vigorously deny that they harbor any ulterior designs on Albania, the emissaries of both have been surreptitiously at work in the country, fomenting plots, encouraging intrigues, giving moral if not material support to the opposing political factions, and stirring up trouble generally. My own opinion is that the present state of tension cannot last indefinitely, and that Italy, when she considers the moment propitious, will take the bull by the horns and declare a protectorate, Albania being granted about the same measure of self-government that Tunisia has under the French. The Albanians

have given convincing proof that they are unfitted to govern themselves, whereas a protectorate would result in bringing peace to a distracted land. Under Italian guardianship, and aided by Italian capital, Albania, which has considerable natural wealth, might be developed into a fairly prosperous land.

The United States is represented at Belgrade by Dr. John Dyneley Prince, formerly dean of the graduate school of New York University, who is one of the most accomplished linguists in the world. He is reputed to speak twenty languages and eleven dialects, though I should imagine that this is an understatement rather than an exaggeration. In any event, he is a recognized authority on the Semitic and Slavonic tongues, speaks Finnish, Lettish, and Hungarian, reads Sanskrit, Sumerian, and Chaldean, and has even translated a book of poems from the Algonquin. One Sunday, at his suggestion, I visited a great Gipsy fair which was being held in the outskirts of Belgrade. To it had flocked the folk of the restless feet from every corner of southeastern Europe. It was a curious and gratifying sight to see the American minister strolling from group to group, chatting and joking with them, to their evident delight, in the strange Romany dialects which even the police could not understand. When Dr. Prince learned that I contemplated visiting Yugoslavia he sent me a letter for presentation to the frontier authorities written in Croat by his own hand, and on the day of our departure he presented

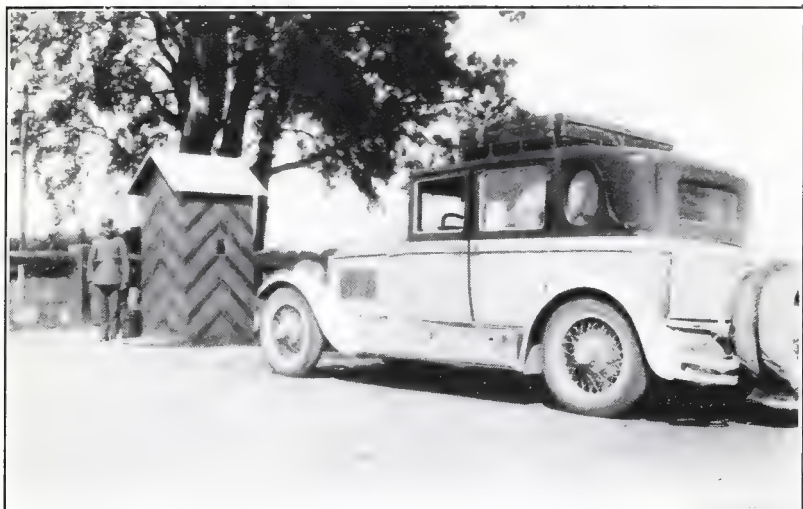
## EMBATTLED BORDERS

me with a similar document written in Serbian. Then, as an afterthought, he dashed off a third letter, this time written in Hungarian.

I really believe that the road from Zemlin, opposite Belgrade, to the Hungarian border is the worst in Europe. In places, indeed, it is not a road at all but merely a cart-track winding deviously across the plain, which during the rainy season is a sea of sticky slime. The road was worst of all, however, in the towns, where it was so slippery and so high-crowned that even with chains on all four wheels and the most cautious driving we barely escaped disaster.

I had been assured in Belgrade that we could quite easily reach Budapest in a single day, but darkness found us only as far as Zenta, where we spent the night in a scrupulously clean little inn ambitiously called the Grand Amerika Hotel. The proprietor, a naturalized American of Serb origin, told us that his wife, whom he had married in Indianapolis and who had never been out of the United States, was on her way over to join him. I wonder what her feelings were when she got her first view of Zenta and the Grand Amerika Hotel.

It was noon of the second day before we reached the Hungarian border near Szeged. The formalities involved in getting out of Yugoslavia were such as might have been expected on leaving Sing Sing, but here they were merely exasperating. We first called at the police station in the little border town—I for-



At the Lithuanian-Latvian frontier



At the Yugoslav-Hungarian frontier

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## BORDERLANDS OF SLAV AND LATIN

get its name—to have our passports inspected and viséd; next to the custom-house at the railway station, where our identity papers and those connected with the car were scrutinized and stamped by another set of officials; then to the headquarters of the military police, where a soldier was assigned to accompany us to the border itself, two miles beyond the town. The officer in command of the frontier guard conscientiously went through our papers all over again, but, being unable to discover anything wrong with them, affixed another stamp and waved us on. “Thank God, we’re through at last,” I said to myself, and stepped on the accelerator. But my self-congratulations were somewhat premature, for we had not proceeded half a kilometer when a Serb sentry appeared from a thatched hut beside the road and halted us with ported rifle. “Passport!” he said gruffly, regarding us as suspiciously as though we were escaping convicts. We satisfied him of our respectability, however; he swung the road-bar upward, and a moment later we rolled past a red-white-and-green striped post and upon Hungarian soil.

There was no sentry in sight, but a sign in Magyar directed us, as nearly as we could decipher it, to a little railway station half a mile away. This proved to be the Hungarian customs. But the solitary soldier in charge was not accustomed to having travelers arrive from the south by motor, and our triptych was a profound mystery to him. Fortunately, I re-

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membered the letter in Hungarian given me by Dr. Prince. It was an open sesame. "Go ahead," said the soldier courteously, after he had read it. "This says that you are Americans, and that's enough for me. Besides, it's almost dinner time."



THE KINGDOM OF THE SERBS, CROATS, AND SLOVENES

## CHAPTER IV

### THE DANGER ON THE DANUBE

**I**N the Szabadsag Tér in Budapest stands a congeries of statuary which, though possessing scant artistic merit, is one of the most significant and appealing in the world. There are four groups, North, East, South, and West, each depicting a prostrate youth or a struggling maiden being dragged into captivity by an armed and ruthless despoiler. They symbolize the territories—comprising more than seven tenths of the country as it was before the war—which were detached from Hungary by the treaty of Trianon. Just as the emblems of mourning which for nearly half a century decked the Strasbourg statue in the Place de la Concorde mutely testified to France's grief and irreconcilability over the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, so the presence of these statues in the heart of the Magyar capital serves as a poignant reminder to Hungarians of *their* lost provinces, and keeps alive a determination eventually to regain them. As long as they stand, there can be no genuine peace in central Europe, Hungary will smolder with resentment and unrest, the shadow of fear will hover over the countries which profited by

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

her dismemberment, and the whole valley of the Danube will remain a powder magazine.

It is one of the parodies, as it is one of the paradoxes, of history that France should have been instrumental in inflicting on Hungary a vastly greater injustice than she herself suffered by the loss of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871; that Italy, six hundred thousand of whose sons laid down their lives for the redemption of *Italia irredenta*, should have helped to create a *Hungaria irredenta*; that England, which entered the war to restore the independence of Belgium, should have consented to upward of three million Hungarians being handed over to alien rule. Though it is true that the United States escaped the reproach of being a party to the treaty of Trianon and concluded a separate peace with Hungary the following year, we Americans cannot absolve ourselves from all responsibility for the wrong that was done and the highly dangerous situation which it has created. For Hungary capitulated, when not a single enemy soldier was on her soil, on the express understanding that the terms of peace should be based on the "points," "ends," and "particulars"—twenty-seven in all—formulated by President Wilson.

It is true that the refusal of the Senate to ratify the treaty of Versailles, inextricably interwoven as it was with the covenant of the League of Nations, left the United States without a voice in the councils of the allies and enormously weakened America's



## THE DANGER ON THE DANUBE

influence in Europe at a highly critical period in European affairs. But it is equally true that had America vigorously protested, either through the organs of public opinion or through the Government at Washington, had she said to the allies and particularly to the representatives of the little parasitic nations, "Hungary is not getting a square deal; the promises given her are not being kept; you have broken the pledge made to her in the name of the allies by President Wilson; in forcing her to accept such terms you are making a mockery of the principles for which we fought, and sowing the seeds of future trouble," such a protest would have been heeded.

But it was not made. Our vision was still distorted by the passions engendered by the great conflict. Our hearing was dulled by the din of the propagandists. In our hearts still lurked a desire for revenge on those who had opposed us in the war. "The Hungarians fought against us, didn't they?" most Americans would have demanded. "They were Germany's allies, weren't they? Yes? Very well, then. Let them take their medicine. Give them all that is coming to them. And let it be good and plenty."

In the Grand Trianon at Versailles, on June 4, 1920, was signed the fourth of a series of pacts which, so the victors unctuously proclaimed, were designed to right the wrongs of oppressed peoples and bring lasting peace to a distracted world. Yet it is difficult for any fair-minded person who is fa-



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miliar with the lands and peoples affected by it to study that extraordinary document without becoming convinced that it was dictated by motives of political expediency, vindictiveness, greed, jealousy, and fear. It was called a treaty of peace, yet nearly every clause contains the seed of future wars or revolutions; it is as packed with potential trouble as a case of TNT; it was referred to as a settlement, yet it settled nothing.

By the terms of the treaty of Trianon, Hungary, admittedly the least culpable of the enemy states, was shorn of approximately seven tenths of her pre-war area and nearly a third of her Magyar population. In other words, 90,000 square miles of territory and close to 3,000,000 people of Hungarian blood were apportioned between Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Austria as a pie might be divided among a gang of hungry boys. Yet before Congress, on February 11, 1918, President Wilson had solemnly declared that "peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty, as if they were chattels or pawns in a game," and followed it up with the further declaration, on July 4 of the same year, that the ends for which the associated peoples of the world were fighting included "the settlement of every question, whether of territory or of sovereignty, of economic arrangement or of political relationship, upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the

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basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery.”

“The Treaty” [of Trianon], to quote the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, a publication which cannot be charged with a bias in favor of the central powers, “took from Hungary all her gold, silver, copper, salt and mercury mines; all but one of her iron mines; her largest and best collieries; and 86% of her forests. The only branch of productive territory of which she retained over half is viticulture (68%).” It might have been added, with equal truth, that the treaty also took from her the whole of her seaboard, a great part of her inland waterways, most of her railways, all save a negligible fraction of her merchant marine, her most important industrial cities, and her richest wheat-growing plains. As though this were not enough, the small mutilated trunk (constituting only 28 per cent of the original kingdom) was saddled with 46 per cent. of the whole foreign debt of the prosperous pre-war country, and, in addition, an undefined burden of reparations. One wonders why the treaty-makers stopped where they did—why they did not carry the job through to its logical conclusion and wipe Hungary off the map altogether by some partition such as that perpetrated at the Congress of Vienna which extinguished Poland for a time.

Such, then, were the penalties imposed upon a

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

country whose Government entered the war under protest, the Hungarian prime minister, Count Stephen Tisza, being the only person present at the fateful crown councils held at Vienna in July, 1914, who had the courage to oppose the attack on Serbia. And it was the same great statesman who, once war had been declared, strenuously opposed the introduction of unlimited submarine warfare and Germany's schemes for territorial aggrandizement. Such was the ungenerous treatment accorded to the only one of the enemy states which emerged from the conflict with a record unsullied by cruelties, excesses, or breaches of international law, it being generally admitted that of all the soldiers of the central powers the Hungarians were the cleanest fighters.

Seeing that historical obligations were repeatedly advanced as pretexts for the final unjust settlement, I may be permitted to remind my readers that Europe owes a twofold debt of gratitude to Hungary. In the tenth century Hungary was the bulwark of Europe against Asiatic invasion, the great champion of the Cross against the Crescent; and in 1919 Hungary again saved Europe, this time from an even greater peril, by overthrowing the Communist régime established by the Reds under Béla Kun. Yet the nations which she had saved in turn from the Turk and the Bolshevik repaid her with dismemberment, impoverishment, and humiliation. How, it may be asked, can the treaty-makers reconcile the policy

## THE DANGER ON THE DANUBE

which they pursued at the Trianon in 1920 with their attitude in 1922 at Lausanne, when they abjectly accepted the terms dictated by the Turks, whose hands were still reddened with the blood of slaughtered Christians?

While we are discussing the subject, it can do no harm to recall the fact that Hungary may be said to have been only technically at war with the United States and England, and that toward them she showed her good feelings by refusing to intern her American and British residents, who were permitted to continue their usual occupations. An illustration of this friendly tolerance toward the nationals of two nations which the Hungarians have always admired is provided by the story told me by an English trainer of race-horses whom I met in southern Hungary shortly after the armistice. He told me that whenever the news of an allied victory leaked through, he and his friends celebrated the event at one of the leading restaurants of Budapest. The table was decked with the flags of the allies and patriotic toasts were drunk without evoking anything more than an occasional jesting reproof from their acquaintances among the clientele of the establishment. Had a group of Hungarians in New York or London attempted to celebrate a victory of the central powers in similar fashion they would have been mobbed, if nothing worse.

Who were the receivers of the loot apportioned at Trianon? You will find their identity unflatter-



## EMBATTLED BORDERS

ingly but unmistakably indicated by those groups of statuary in the Szabadsag Tér which I have already mentioned.

That Serbia, one of the greatest sufferers by the war, should be recompensed for her losses was eminently right and proper. To the Serbs Hungary was compelled to cede the provinces of Croatia, Slavonia, and Slovenia, with their overwhelmingly Slavic populations, which was essentially just; and also, which was not just, the Voivodena, in Hungary proper, with nearly half a million Magyars. It might be mentioned, incidentally, that the Croats and Slovenes do not appear to be getting along any better under Serb rule than they did under Hungarian, having, as their leaders assert, merely exchanged one tyranny for another. The western Slavs have always been an unruly and contentious people, however, and Hungary, I imagine, is secretly rather glad to be rid of them.

The greatest beneficiary by Hungary's dismemberment was Rumania, which was awarded the whole of Transylvania, a province enormously rich in minerals and forests; nearly all of the Banat, which is a fertile and highly cultivated agricultural country; and a broad stretch of the wheat-growing Hungarian plain, the annexed territories having a Magyar population of 1,650,000. This, with the Austrian province of the Bukovina, was the price which the allies, by one of their numerous secret treaties, agreed in 1916 to pay Rumania in return for an im-



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mediate declaration of war. It is true that the Rumanian army promptly ran away, and that during the remaining years of the war Rumania was more of a liability than an asset to the allied cause, but the allies had made the bargain and they stuck to it.

It is far more difficult to justify the transfers of territory on the north, where the all-of-a-sudden republic of Czechoslovakia was permitted to annex Carpathian Ruthenia and Hungarian Slovakia, the latter province having a million Magyar inhabitants. The excuses advanced by the treaty-makers for their excessive generosity to Rumania cannot be applied to the Czechoslovak transaction—first, because the Magyars of Slovakia live in solid blocks along the Hungarian border instead of being intermingled with other nationalities as is the case in Transylvania; and, secondly, because the Entente was under no obligations to the hyphenate state which they had created, save perhaps for the handful of Czech “legionaries” who deserted to the allies. The chief claim of the Czechs to allied gratitude is that they were thoroughly disloyal to their own side. As for the Slovaks, they have no claim at all, for it is to their everlasting credit that they refused to turn traitors and fought gallantly on the side of the central powers to the end.

The most astounding and incomprehensible of all the decisions made by the Trianon treaty-makers, however, was the allotment to Austria of the Burgenland, a long and very narrow strip of territory in

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

western Hungary with about 90,000 Magyar inhabitants. Just why Austria, which was as much an enemy nation as Hungary and infinitely more culpable, should have been thus rewarded is a question for which no one seems to have a very convincing answer. There must be reasons for everything that happens, outside of lunatic asylums, as Mr. George Birmingham pithily remarks, but it is sometimes very hard to find them.

If the allies were really sincere in their protestations that they wished to deal fairly by the minorities, if they were working for the greatest good of the peoples of central Europe, with no thought of political expediency or revenge, why, it may pertinently be asked, were Hungary's repeated appeals for plebiscites refused in every instance save one, and that an insignificant one? A series of plebiscites would at least have given the peoples directly affected by the treaty opportunities to express their own preferences as to what should become of them, which ought to have counted for something. If, on the other hand, a plebiscite is not a satisfactory method of settling such problems, as some claim, then why, pray, were plebiscites held in Schleswig, Luxemburg, Klagenfurt, Allenstein, in Transcaucasia even? Why were the Turks promised a plebiscite in Thrace and the Hungarians refused one in Transylvania? Why is the sovereignty of the Saar to be settled by plebiscite in 1935 and that of Upper Silesia determined by the same method the year fol-

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lowing? These are embarrassing questions, but the public has a right to ask them.

Of course, those who were behind the scenes during the treaty-making at the Trianon know the answer. The nations of the Little Entente—Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia—didn't dare to submit their claims to plebiscitary decisions because they knew that they would lose. Because France desperately needed the aid of the Little Entente nations for carrying out her coercive schemes against a recalcitrant Germany she supported them in their refusal to permit plebiscites in the debated regions. England, though secretly disgusted with the whole sorry business, found it inexpedient to oppose France on a question which did not, after all, directly affect her own interests, particularly as she foresaw the need of French support against Turkey. And Italy, which had just annexed against their wishes 280,000 German Austrians in South Tyrol and 230,000 Yugoslavs in the Veneto, could hardly have been expected to look with favor on a scheme of self-determination which might set an embarrassing precedent.

The case presented by the Hungarians was so strong, however, there was so much danger of the public having its eyes opened to the truth of the situation, so much fear of a revulsion of public opinion, that the chairman of the conference, M. Millerand, then prime minister of France, sought to smooth matters over for the time being by promis-

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ing Hungary in the name of the allied powers that, if it was found that the new frontiers involved any economic or ethnical injustice, she could appeal to the League of Nations. Thereupon the Council of Ambassadors, which always knew on which side its bread was buttered and which always had the final say, announced that any alteration of the frontiers as fixed by the treaty, however slight, would constitute a breach of the treaty, and therefore could not be permitted. I ask you now, in all seriousness, if a more fantastic or asinine situation can be found outside the pages of "Alice in Wonderland."

I shall be pardoned, I trust, if at this point I digress from my narrative long enough to give an outline—I shall endeavor to sketch it in a few broad strokes—of the momentous events which occurred in Hungary during the period between the armistice and the signing of the peace treaty, for a knowledge of these events is essential if one is to view in its true perspective what happened at the Trianon or what is happening in the valley of the Danube to-day.

After the death in November, 1916, of Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, that curious political and ethnical mosaic known as the Dual Monarchy began rapidly to crumble. Austria was already weak; and the abrupt dismissal by the young Emperor Charles of the Hungarian prime minister, Count Stephen Tisza, broke one of the few ties by which the two nations were still united. The



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protracted war had become extremely and increasingly unpopular in Hungary, the publication in January, 1918, of President Wilson's fourteen points, which were accepted with implicit faith by the Hungarian people, contributing to the general desire for peace. The sufferings and privations caused by the blockade had not only encouraged the defeatist propaganda; they had paved the way for the spread of communistic ideas brought home by the great numbers of Hungarian soldiers released from Russian prison camps after the treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

On October 25, 1918, the extreme left wing of the radicals and Socialists sympathetic to bolshevism formed the so-called National Council under the presidency of Count Michael Karolyi, a nobleman of distinguished family but of the most dubious reputation. The proclamations issued by the National Council foreshadowed the coming of bolshevism, and within less than a week Budapest was completely in the hands of the revolutionaries. On October 31 Karolyi was named prime minister, and the same afternoon his bitterest enemy, Count Tisza, the strong man of Hungary and one of the ablest statesmen in Europe, was murdered by emissaries of the council in his own drawing-room in the presence of his family.

At Villa Giusti, near Padua, on November 3, the armistice between the Austro-Hungarian and Italian armies was signed. A line of demarcation was



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drawn in the southwest; elsewhere the old political frontier remained unchanged. But Karolyi, believing that he could obtain better terms from the Entente, hastened to Belgrade, where, on November 13, he concluded a separate convention with General Franchet d'Esperey. The terms stipulated by the French commander were far more onerous, however, than those granted by the Italians, the new line of demarcation being well within the old frontier. It was provided that, though the Hungarian troops were to withdraw behind this line, Hungarian civil control should continue to function in the evacuated territories, but before the ink in which it was written was fairly dry the agreement was broken. Hungarian officials were removed wholesale, the Hungarian police and gendarmerie disarmed, communications interrupted, and the inhabitants of the occupied regions forced to take oaths of allegiance to Yugoslavia, Rumania, or Czechoslovakia, as the case might be, many of them even being pressed into the military service of those countries. Even at this early stage Hungary's enemies made it amply clear that she had no rights which they felt bound to respect, that they had no intention of keeping the pledges made her unless it suited their plans to do so.

The thirteenth of November is a tragic date in Hungarian history, for on that day came from Belgrade the news of Karolyi's failure to obtain even moderately lenient terms from the allies, while from





A "GULYA" OF THE HORTOBAGY

The *gulyas* guard the herds of huge white oxen which range at will across the great Hungarian plain

## THE DANGER ON THE DANUBE

Vienna was flashed a message that the imperial Government had completely collapsed and that the Emperor Charles had announced his abdication. The country was bewildered, stunned. Utterly disheartened, the people lapsed into a state of apathetic resignation. So there was virtually no protest when, at a mass meeting held in Budapest by the communistic elements, the Karolyi government, without consulting Parliament, proclaimed Hungary a republic and Michael Karolyi its president.

There now appeared upon the Hungarian stage a peculiarly sinister figure in the person of a young Jew, born in northern Hungary, named Béla Kun. You will picture him as a plump, rather dapper little man, with a head too large for his body, a sensuous mouth, an overprominent nose, and bright, shifting eyes. A lawyer by profession and a journalist by avocation, he had obtained a commission in the army—he commanded a supply train—was captured by the Russians early in the war, was in Russia at the time of the revolution, and became an apostle of bolshevism among the Hungarian prisoners of war. His peculiar talents were appreciated by Lenin, who, providing him with a forged passport, sent him back to Hungary disguised as a Red Cross doctor. Amply supplied with money by Moscow, he betook himself to Budapest, where he promptly set about the task which had been assigned him of upsetting the established order. He considered himself Lenin's viceroy in central Europe and held long daily conversations

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by wireless with his master. As the result of a conflict with the police, Kun was wounded and in prison when the Karolyi cabinet, as a protest against the harsh conditions imposed by the allies, handed over to him the reins of government. That Karolyi, whose family stands for all that is best in Hungary, should have deliberately betrayed his already distracted country to the Reds, explains why he is held in loathing and contempt by all decent Hungarians.

Now the Reds were in undisputed control of the Hungarian capital. The streets were patrolled by bands of armed Communists. The prisons were emptied, notorious criminals being turned loose to prey upon the helpless people. Suffrage was denied to priests, lunatics, and employers of labor. Private property was confiscated. Private houses and apartments were commandeered. The deposits intrusted to the banks were seized and communized. Foreign loans were repudiated. A force of Red guards was organized. The opponents of communism were persecuted, terrorized, tortured, murdered. Hundreds of innocent persons were shot or hung. For nineteen weeks the specter of fear stalked the streets of the Magyar capital.

It was the sturdy peasantry of the Hungarian plain who broke the power of bolshevism in central Europe. Kun had planned to convert them to bolshevism by force of arms, but the obstinate peasants remained as deaf to his threats as to his arguments. They stubbornly refused to exchange their wheat



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and potatoes for the paper money printed by the Bolsheviki, nor could the reign of terror which the Red leader instituted in the provinces make them change their minds. For these Magyars were folk of quite a different temper from the servile Russian muzhiks who had obeyed so blindly the orders of Lenin. They could be neither cajoled nor coerced. They merely sat tight, defied the Bolsheviki to do their worst, and waited in stolid patience for the good old days to come again. Meanwhile, Budapest with its million inhabitants was starving.

Bolshevist rule in Hungary collapsed so suddenly and amid such confusion that it is very difficult to determine just what happened. But one or two things stand out clearly. When the allies halted Kun's advance against the Czechs, and his forces in the south were driven back by the Rumanians, the dictator found himself in a desperate position, for he could no longer appeal to the distracted country on the grounds of nationalism. Moreover, the peasants were in an ugly mood and it was known that the best elements in the country were secretly organizing a counter-revolution. So, when word came that a Rumanian army had crossed the Tisza, Kun realized that his day was over and that his only hope of safety lay in flight. He made his escape to Vienna in a special train. Here he was locked up in the local lunatic asylum, but after an attempt had been made to rid the world of him by sending him poisoned Easter eggs—the laudable attempt failed because,

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being a Jew, he did not observe Easter—he was shipped to Russia, where his fellow-Bolsheviki acclaimed him a hero and a martyr.

The restoration of a stable régime in Hungary proved extremely difficult owing to the attitude of the allies, particularly the Rumanians, the latter welcoming if not actually encouraging anarchy in the country because it provided them with a pretext for armed intervention, which, they hoped, might be prolonged into a permanent occupation.

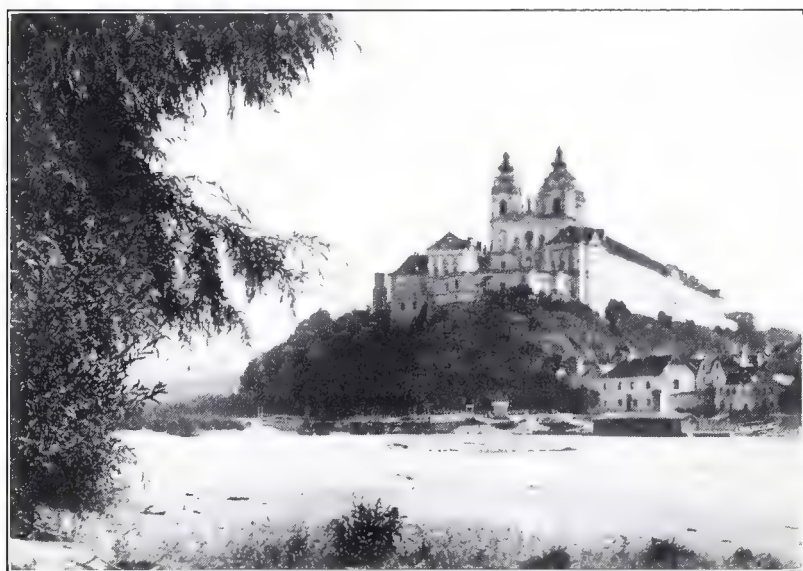
In May, 1919, a counter-revolutionary government, which represented the best elements of the country, had been organized at Arad—already occupied by the Rumanians—under the presidency of Count Julius Karolyi, who should under no circumstances be confused with his cousin Michael. After a few days, however, the Rumanians sent the members of this government under military escort to Szeged, then occupied by French troops. After the flight of Béla Kun and the fall of the Commune the provisional government again moved its quarters, this time to the shores of Lake Balaton. Here the organization of a national army was intrusted to Admiral Nicholas Horthy, who had been the commander of the Austro-Hungarian fleet during the latter part of the war and had become a national hero as a result of his brilliant naval exploits in the Adriatic.

In Budapest, meanwhile, the popular Archduke Joseph had assumed the reins of government, but the Supreme Council in Paris refused to recognize





The Castle of Schönbüchel, near Melk, built in 1135



The Benedictine monastery at Melk, built in 831

ON THE UPPER DANUBE

## THE DANGER ON THE DANUBE

any Habsburg in a position of authority in Hungary. Things were in such a chaotic state, however, in Budapest, which had been occupied by the Rumanians, that the Council, becoming seriously alarmed, hastily despatched to that city four generals—an American, an Englishman, a Frenchman, and an Italian. The four generals found themselves fully occupied in thwarting the excesses of the Rumanians, who had literally run amuck, plundering state buildings and private residences alike and destroying wholesale such property as they were unable to ship out of the country. Every telephone instrument in the city was confiscated, plumbing fixtures were ripped out, delicate scientific instruments were taken from the government laboratories and then allowed to rust because the Rumanians did not know how to use them; furniture, tapestries, silverware, motor-cars, live stock, agricultural implements, machinery of all sorts were shipped to Rumania by the train-load, the value of the goods thus "requisitioned," according to a report sent to Paris by Colonel Loree, totaling nearly twenty millions of dollars. And this, mind you, when the war had been over for upward of nine months!

The Rumanians also attempted to loot the state museums, with their priceless art treasures, historical manuscripts, and scientific collections, but they were foiled in this by the energy and courage of General H. H. Bandholtz, the American member of the allied military commission. When word was



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brought to the fiery little general that the Rumanians were pillaging the National Museum he jumped into his car, accompanied by a single aide, and drove at top speed to the museum. Backed up before the entrance was a row of army camions which Rumanian soldiers, under the direction of their officers, were loading with plunder. When General Bandholtz arrived on the scene they were carrying out a collection of stuffed birds! Armed only with a riding-crop, the American drove the looters out of the building, locked and sealed the doors, and sent word to the Rumanian commander that he would be held personally responsible by the allied commission for any further plundering.

So gross were the excesses committed by the Rumanians during their occupation of Budapest that Herbert Hoover, as chairman of the American Relief Administration, telegraphed to the Bucharest Government that he would discontinue all shipments of food supplies into Rumania unless the outrages immediately ceased. And the Rumanians, who had defied the Supreme Council with impunity, realized that it was not safe to disobey Hoover. It so happened that I was the guest of the late King Ferdinand at the castle of Pelesch in the Carpathians when this ultimatum was received. It is characteristic of the workings of the Rumanian mind that the king, ordinarily the quietest of men, became violently angry, accusing Mr. Hoover of attempting to coerce Rumania, under threat of starvation, into granting

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valuable oil concessions to certain American oil companies in which, so the king alleged, the American food administrator was financially interested!

On November 14, 1919, the Rumanians, yielding to allied pressure, sullenly withdrew to the line of the Tisza, and Horthy rode into Budapest at the head of the small national army amid the frenzied cheers of the citizens. General elections were held in the following January; the new National Assembly restored and put into force the ancient constitution, and, the question of a king still being in abeyance, elected Horthy regent of Hungary unanimously and by acclamation.

Owing to the chaotic condition in which Hungary had been ever since the armistice, to the two revolutions, the Rumanian invasion, and the lack of any stable or responsible government, it was not until January, 1920, that the Hungarian peace delegation, headed by Count Albert Apponyi, Count Paul Teleki, and Count Stephen Bethlen, arrived in Paris.

Now, in partial explanation of what followed, it must be kept in mind that the Hungarians were late in coming to the peace table. The treaty with Germany had been signed at Versailles in the summer of 1919; the pact with Austria at St. Germain in October; and that with Bulgaria at Neuilly in November. The task involved in these three settlements had been a prodigious one, and before the arrival of the Hungarian delegates the principal allied statesmen had taken their departure, for their powers of per-

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sonal application were exhausted and the domestic affairs of their own countries urgently demanded their attention. President Wilson had long since hastened back to America to plead unavailingly the cause of the League of Nations. Lloyd George had returned to England to face a hostile Parliament and a discontented nation. Clemenceau, his government fallen, had sailed for India to seek relaxation in tiger-shooting. Orlando, discredited by the Fascisti, was living in semi-obscurity in Rome.

The withdrawal of the Big Four had left the drafting of the peace treaties with Germany's allies to the subordinate members of the allied delegations, and these substitutes were not strong enough to exercise anything like the authority and moderating influence which their predecessors had done. Moreover, though only half the work of restoring a lasting peace to Europe had been performed, the world's interest in peace-making had evaporated and the spotlight of publicity which had been focused continuously on Versailles rested only spasmodically on the Trianon, where the treaty with Hungary was drafted behind closed doors and signed amid general indifference on the part of the peoples of America and western Europe.

But there was no indifference on the part of those various minor nationalities which had asserted themselves since the war and stood to profit enormously from the settlements thus obscurely made. The reverberations of the last gun had scarcely died away be-

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fore the spokesmen of all the little peoples of eastern Europe were awing, flitting toward Paris like vultures which scent a dying animal from afar. Here came Bratianu with his black beard and bullying roar; the venerable Pasic, acquisitive and uncompromising; Benès of the boyish face and the subtle mind, together with a horde of advisers, experts, secretaries, pamphleteers, and professional propagandists. Even the ubiquitous Queen Marie hastened up from Bucharest to lend the aid of her persuasiveness and charm. Tons of propaganda were printed and distributed; newspapers were subsidized; foreign publicists and public men who had an eye out for the main chance were bought up—or bought off—with money or decorations. Every conceivable interpretation was given to President Wilson's celebrated reference to "self-determination"; the theme was played continuously, with every sort of variation.

They knew exactly what they wanted, these special pleaders from beyond the Danube, and to gain their ends they utilized every means, played on every emotion, pulled every string. It was more like a rush of homesteaders to stake out claims on public lands than an orderly and equitable settlement of a problem which vitally affected the future peace of the world and the welfare of millions of human beings. No wonder that the neutral nations looked on with mingled astonishment and cynicism. It was an amazing spectacle—and a sorry one.



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This was how grave abuses, containing the sure seed of future wars, crept into the central European peace settlement. The surprising thing, indeed, when one recalls the apathy of the allies and the contempt shown for the lessons of history by the allied negotiators, is not that Hungary's enemies obtained so much, but that they did not obtain more. Had their original demands been agreed to, there would probably be no such country as Hungary on the map of Europe to-day. Rumania, for example, insisted that she be permitted to push her frontier as far westward as the Tisza. Yugoslavia laid claim to the important industrial city of Szeged with its adjacent territory and to Pécs with its valuable coal mines. And the Czechs and Yugoslavs jointly urged that their countries be connected by transforming a strip of territory running along the entire western frontier of Hungary into a "Slav corridor." Though these preposterous claims were not allowed, the cessions of Hungarian territory made to the neighboring states exceeded their wildest expectations.

The irresponsible and unintelligent fashion in which the new boundaries were drawn and a brand-new map of central Europe substituted almost overnight for the slow growth of centuries is illustrated by a story told me by a well-known English diplomat who was attached to the British peace delegation at the Trianon. While the question of the delimitation of Hungary's eastern frontier was under discussion, an English traveler, re-



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garded as something of an authority on central European affairs, happened to drop into the conference room, whereupon he was invited to express his opinion. Being in a hurry to keep a luncheon engagement, he paused only long enough to pick up a pencil and on the map which was spread upon the table to roughly sketch a line. "That," said he carelessly, "is approximately my idea of where the frontier should run." Upon opening his morning paper a few days later he was astounded to find that the line of demarcation which he had so casually suggested had actually been adopted by the treaty-makers as the new frontier.

I suppose that some partition of Hungary was inevitable after the war. Included in the old Hungary, remember, were numerous large minorities, and there can be no denying that in many cases these were subjected to injustice and oppression. Consequently, the Hungarians did not come into court with clean hands. It is very difficult to decide, however, whether the treatment now being accorded to the Magyar minorities in Rumania and Czechoslovakia is any improvement on the fashion in which the Rumanian and Czech minorities were treated in the old days by the Hungarians. Even in Hungary I heard few complaints in regard to the condition of the Magyar minorities in Yugoslavia, so it may be assumed that the Slavs are treating their new subjects with fairness. About all that can be said with any confidence is that the allies, in turning Transylvania

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over to the Rumanians, and Slovakia and Ruthenia to the Czechs, have not only failed lamentably to improve matters for the inhabitants of those regions but they have created an extremely dangerous situation.

While admitting the impossibility of drawing boundaries which would work no hardships and which would be just to all the peoples concerned, the point I wish to make is that the present frontiers were fixed on no principle—economic, ethnographic, geographic, or political. There is nothing which makes for security or permanence. For the surgical operation performed on Hungary by the amateur map-makers at the Trianon no adequate reason has ever been shown, and it is certain that a high-spirited people like the Hungarians will never rest until the injury done them has been repaired. It is obvious that they cannot acquiesce in an arrangement which strangles their commerce, erects barriers where no natural divisions exist, and leaves more than three millions of their people at the mercy of foreigners who hate them.

Granting the necessity of making certain rectifications in the frontiers, one still wonders why the job was done so clumsily and unintelligently. I realize, of course, that the boundary-makers were confronted by a very perplexing, indeed, an almost insoluble, problem. If you will take the trouble to examine an ethnographic map of the Danube basin you will see at a glance what I mean. Pre-war Hungary consisted



THE STEWARD OF THE CROWN OF ST. STEPHEN  
ADMIRAL NICHOLAS HORTHY, REGENT OF HUNGARY

This sailor-statesman has led his country through difficulties such as few men in history have been called upon to face. The Hungarians might go much further and do much worse than to choose him to occupy their empty throne



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of a vast oval plain surrounded by a fence of mountains. The inhabitants of this plain formed one of the most homogeneous peoples in the world—descendants of those warrior tribesmen who came riding out of Asia in the dim dawn of history. Throughout the centuries they have steadfastly refrained from intermarriage with the neighboring peoples and, as a consequence, the old Magyar strain has remained astonishingly pure. But the situation was quite different along the fringes of the plain, where, as the result of successive invasions and migrations, other peoples—Germans, Czechs, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Rumanians, Serbs, Croats, Slovenes—had become inextricably intermingled with the original Magyar population. As a consequence, it is hard to decide which an ethnographic map of central Europe most resembles—a patchwork quilt or a jig-saw puzzle.

The Hungarians assert that the territories ceded to Rumania and Czechoslovakia under the terms of the treaty of Trianon are in spirit Hungarian and are inhabited in the main by people of the Magyar race, supporting the latter contention with elaborately colored maps and impressive arrays of figures. Now the truth is that every town of any size in Transylvania, and nearly every town in the Carpathians, is predominantly Magyar, in many cases almost wholly so. But it is equally true that the country districts of Transylvania are chiefly inhabited by Rumanians, and in the Carpathians by men of



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a variety of other races, mainly Slovaks and Ruthenians. In fact, were an honest census taken in these disputed territories, town and country being regarded as one, it is possible that the Magyars would be found to be slightly in the minority.

Every one must recognize, of course, that it would be utterly out of the question to delimit a frontier which would leave all the Magyars on one side and all the non-Magyars on the other. Even the Hungarians admit this. What they object to is that there has been no give and take; that the allies, in order to give all the Slavs to Yugoslavia, all the Rumanians to Rumania, and all the Slovaks and Ruthenians to Czechoslovakia, likewise handed over to those nations three and a quarter million Magyars. In certain cases, moreover, solid blocks of Magyars were handed over to their enemies for purely strategic reasons. For Hungary it has been a case of "Heads I win, tails you lose."

As might have been expected, enormous economic difficulties have resulted from the unintelligent fashion in which the new boundaries were drawn. Estergom, the ancient capital of the Arpad kings and the birthplace of St. Stephen, is a case in point. The city itself, being on the right bank of the Danube, remains in Hungary, but the railway station, being on the left bank, is now in Czechoslovakia. And, the bridge having been destroyed, there is no longer any connection between the two.

Consider the case of the miners of Salgo Tarjan.

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The town in which they live is now in Czechoslovakia, whereas the entrances to the mines in which they earn their living are on the Hungarian side of the line. So every morning when they go to work they have to present their passports, properly viséd, to two sets of frontier officials, and they have to repeat the performance every evening when they go home. Imagine the same rule applied to every person who lives in Brooklyn or Jersey City but works in New York!

Another interesting case is provided by Pécs and Szeged, in the south of Hungary. Pécs has coal mines, and Szeged, an important industrial city, has factories which require coal. The distance by railway between the two cities is only about fourscore miles, but the railway twice crosses the Yugoslav-Hungarian frontier, so that coal sent by that route would have to pay an import duty each time. The only way, therefore, for the Szeged factories to obtain Pécs coal is via Budapest, which entails a detour of something over five hundred miles. To again employ an American parallel, it is as though Scranton coal, in order to reach Philadelphia had to be shipped via Buffalo.

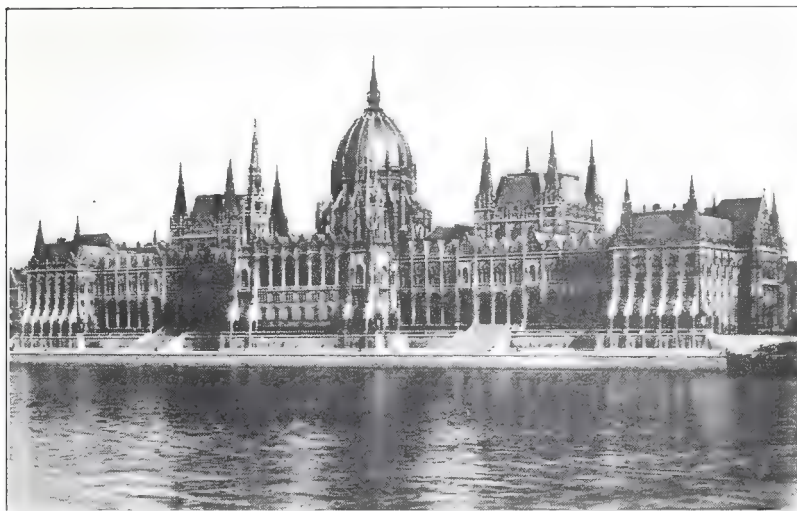
In the old days economic life in Hungary was very simple. The farmers of the plain sold their grain and live stock to the people of the mountains, and the highlanders found a ready market for their coal and lumber among the folk on the plain. It might be supposed that this common-sense interchange of com-

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modities would have continued, regardless of the artificial political barriers erected by the map-makers of the Trianon. But such is not the case. On the contrary, commercial intercourse between Hungary and her former provinces has been obstructed by every device that the ingenuity and maliciousness of her neighbors can suggest.

The theory of the allied powers was that the Austro-Hungarian monarchy fell, not because it was composed of numerous nationalities, but because the rights and liberties of the subject nationalities had not been adequately secured. To guard against a recurrence of these abuses they introduced a new system into European politics—the system of international guarantee of the rights of minorities and international supervision of their protection. In order to secure these rights, special articles were included in the various peace treaties and special minorities treaties were concluded between the principal allied powers and the succession states. Generally speaking, these instruments give the following guarantees to the minority populations:

1. Rights equal to those of any nationals of the country to protection of life and liberty and the free exercise of their religion.
2. A special right to the acquisition of the nationality of the country in question and to the exercise of civil and political rights.
3. Free use of their mother-tongue in public life, in trade, in religion, in the press, in publications, in public meetings, and in the courts of law.



The Houses of Parliament



The High Courts of Justice

THE CAPITAL OF THE MAGYARS





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4. The right of maintaining at their own expense charitable, religious, or educational institutions.

5. In districts in which the minority constitutes a considerable proportion of the population instruction in the primary schools of the state shall be given in the language of that minority, and the minority shall be assured an equitable share in the sums provided by the state and municipal budgets for educational, religious, or charitable purposes.

Though, under pressure from the great powers, the Rumanian Government was forced to sign the minorities treaties, it became amply clear from the outset that it had no intention of abiding by them, the excuse offered for violating them being that they limited the nation's sovereignty. As to the policy which should be pursued toward the Hungarian minorities the public men and publicists of Rumania are divided into two camps which hold diametrically opposed points of view.

The attitude of the more intelligent and more far-seeing party, which, unfortunately, represents only a small minority, has been voiced by an eminent Rumanian scholar, Professor Trajan Bratu.

"Whether we like it or not," he writes, "we have racial and religious minorities in our country which form one third of the total and one half of the town population. We can neither destroy them, nor force them to leave the country. It is evident that the interests of our country demand that we should live in harmony with them, not estrange them and turn them into enemies."

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The opposite and popular point of view is expressed by Mr. E. D. B. Vasiliu, an outspoken apostle of chauvinism and coercion, who declares that "These minorities are assimilable and must be put under the terror and influence of the original population."

And it is this latter policy that the Bucharest Government has attempted to carry out, with the result that a quarter of a million of the Hungarian inhabitants of Transylvania, the greater number belonging to the intelligent middle classes, have been forced to leave the country. This wholesale exodus of a people who had settled in Transylvania nearly a thousand years before Rumania came into existence was accomplished by numerous means—by eviction from their homes, sequestration of their property, prohibition of their language, closing of their religious and educational institutions, by intimidation, flogging, and even torture. The history of modern Europe contains few more shameful chapters.

Because I have no wish to appear sensational; because I am, generally speaking, opposed to "muck-raking"; and because I am fully aware that I shall be charged with being a propagandist for Hungary, it is with considerable hesitation that I have decided to clinch my statements by enumerating a few of the outrages which the Rumanian Government has inflicted on its helpless Hungarian minorities. I use "outrage" advisedly; it is the only adequate word. Let me make it amply clear, however, that I hold no

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grudge against the Rumanians or their Government. The former, as individuals, I rather like; their Government—from which, incidentally, as from the members of the ruling family, I have received many courtesies—I consider one of the most corrupt and tyrannical in Europe. But, even at the risk of being held ungrateful, I feel that it is my duty to tell my readers what I firmly believe to be the truth about the Transylvanian situation.

I have been in Transylvania on several occasions since the annexation; I have talked with Rumanians and Hungarians of all classes and of all shades of opinion; and the instances which I shall quote, far from being untrustworthy rumors, are amply susceptible of proof. Some of them are authenticated by official orders; others are taken from the report of the commission sent to Transylvania by the American Unitarian Association, the veracity and fairness of whose members are above suspicion.

The first and simplest stage in the Rumanization of Transylvania was to change the external appearance of the towns. Immediately after the occupation, the military authorities ordered not only the removal of the Hungarian inscriptions on public buildings, railways, and schools, which was doubtless justifiable, but also the changing of the street names and shop signs, even in those communities with unmixed Hungarian and Saxon populations. In Vajdahunyad four days were allowed for changing the shop signs from Hungarian to Rumanian; in Zilah, a fortnight;

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in Czikszereda the proprietors of two cafés—the Kossuth and the Europa—were fined 1000 lei each for not changing the names of their establishments within the allotted time.

The director of railways, General Jonescu, issued an order forbidding railway employees to announce the names of the stations or to give any information to travelers in Hungarian. "No excuse," the order reads, "will be accepted for giving any information to anybody in another language than Rumanian."

The director of the post and telegraph office at Temesvar sent the following notification to his subordinates: "I wish to inform all superior and inferior officials that I shall no longer tolerate the use of Hungarian in the offices. Customers must always be answered in Rumanian, unless they are absolutely ignorant of the language."

The chief educational inspector of Arad ordered that the pupils of the state schools must use Rumanian exclusively. "The minister of education," the order ran, "wishes to exclude all kinds of racial and religious strife from the schools. This can only be realized if the pupils use Rumanian instead of their mother-tongue. In consequence he orders that they shall use that language even in their private intercourse."

The commission sent to Rumania by the American Unitarian Association reported that in some places the churches of that denomination had been com-



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pelled to expunge the familiar Unitarian motto, "*Egy az Isten*" (God is One), over their doors; and that the authorities had notified the Unitarian bishop of Transylvania that his official communications would not be answered until the words of the motto on his ancient seal of office, "*Unitarius püspök*," were changed to Rumanian.

Though the Hague convention specifically forbids "all seizure or destruction of, or wilful damage to, institutions, historic monuments, works of art and science," the Rumanian authorities ordered the removal or destruction of all memorials, statues, and tablets which might serve to remind the Hungarian minorities of their past history.

In Brasso the memorial of Arpad, the Magyar prince who led the Hungarians into their present country a thousand years ago, was blown up. The statue of the Emperor Francis Joseph in Karansebes was demolished as a symbol of "the humiliating and shameful past." Both in Nagyszeben and Ujazentes the memorial tablets of Pétofi, the greatest Hungarian poet, were broken into bits. In Marosvasarhely the Rumanian mayor ordered all the frescoes and stained-glass windows of the town hall and the museum to be destroyed because they depicted scenes from Hungarian history.

In many parts of the annexed territories the wearing of Hungarian costumes, the singing of Hungarian songs, the dancing of Hungarian dances even, have been forbidden under penalty of fines or im-



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prisonment. In the spring of 1923 the Bucharest Government issued an order that all books printed in the Hungarian language in Hungary since 1919 and found in Rumanian territory were to be confiscated. This order included not only propagandist publications but translations of the works of Homer, Goethe, and Shakespeare!

From reputable sources I heard numerous stories of the brutalities—imprisonment, floggings, tortures even—inflicted by the Rumanians on innocent persons for no other reason than that they were Hungarians, but I shall not repeat them here because I am unable to substantiate them, though I have no reason to believe that they are untrue.

It should be kept in mind, of course, that ever since the close of the war the Rumanians have been highly excited and the country in a continuous state of political turmoil; that public opinion has been systematically inflamed by chauvinistic propaganda; that many of the minor officials doubtless acted on their own initiative, without the authority of the central government; and that numerous Rumanian individuals seized the opportunity offered by the annexation, with the confusion which ensued, to vent their spite on those who had formerly been their masters and to satisfy ancient grudges. The undeniable fact remains, however, that the Hague convention, to which Rumania is a signatory, has been repeatedly violated; that the minorities treaties have been treated as scraps of paper; and that Rumania's new

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subjects have in many cases been denied those elementary rights which they have been solemnly guaranteed and to which every dictate of human justice entitles them.

In the spring of 1922 the curtain rose on the last act of the tragedy of the non-Rumanian peoples of Transylvania when the expropriation of their lands began under the provisions of the agrarian reform, whose chief aim was the destruction of the Hungarian landed interests. I have not the space at my disposal wherein to discuss the arguments for and against this radical measure. Justly administered, there is much to be said in its favor, for in theory it takes land from those who have more than their needs require and gives it to those who have little or none. But it has not been justly administered in Transylvania. It is enough to say here, however, that the peasants have received an average of less than three acres apiece; that more than one third of the total area expropriated has been retained by the state; that the owners have been reimbursed to the extent of only about 5 per cent. of the market value of the lands taken from them, and even this was not in cash but in non-transferable government bonds; that the agricultural prosperity of Transylvania has suffered enormously; and that the whole transaction has been characterized by scandals which have implicated some of the highest officials in the kingdom.

It is necessary, however, to distinguish between

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the cases of those Hungarian residents of Transylvania who have acquired Rumanian citizenship, and whose properties the Rumanian Government therefore has a legal right to do with as it pleases, and the cases of the other owners of property in Transylvania who are not Rumanian citizens. To those French, British, and Italian nationals whose holdings in Transylvania have been expropriated the Rumanian Government has given full indemnity, paying them approximately five million dollars a year. I know of a French countess, for example, whose claim was paid in full, and in cash, within a week. The Transylvanian landowners of Hungarian nationality, on the other hand, have either received insignificant compensation for their properties or have not been compensated at all. It is against this action, which is not only discriminatory but which violates the peace treaties and all international law, that the Hungarian Government has lodged a protest with the League of Nations.

Paragraph 250 of the treaty of Trianon explicitly provides that "the property rights and interests of Hungarian nationals . . . situated in the territories which formed part of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy shall not be subject to retention or liquidation. . . . Such property rights and interests shall be restored to their owners freed from any measure of this kind." It is further provided that claims made by Hungarian nationals—by which is meant those who have retained their Hungarian citizenship

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—shall be submitted for adjudication to a mixed arbitral tribunal consisting of representatives of each of the disputing states, with a neutral chairman. In order to obtain redress for the grievances of its nationals in Transylvania, and in strict accordance with the provisions of the peace treaty, the Hungarian Government lodged an appeal with the League of Nations, which ordered a mixed arbitral tribunal to be convened. Thereupon the Rumanian Government declared the tribunal “non-competent” to deal with the issue and obstructed the proceedings by withdrawing its member. In January, 1927, after a long discussion, the tribunal confirmed its competence, whereupon Rumania declared point-blank that it would not submit to its jurisdiction. In March Hungary asked the League to appoint a neutral judge in place of the Rumanian representative who had been withdrawn and that the question of the competence of the tribunal should be submitted to the International Court at The Hague. This request was opposed by Rumania and for some reason refused by the League of Nations, which appointed a committee with Sir Austen Chamberlain, the British foreign minister, as reporter to consider the matter.

When the League met in September, 1927, Sir Austen Chamberlain announced his decision, which was that the appeal to The Hague must be refused, and he laid down the doctrine that the Rumanian agrarian law superseded that country’s treaty obligations and that a substitute neutral judge could



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only be appointed to the arbitral tribunal on the condition that the Hungarians admitted that principle in advance. In other words, he consented to give the Hungarians a hearing on condition that the judgment went against them. In a speech which he delivered a few days later the British statesman sought to excuse his extraordinary decision by explaining that it had been largely influenced by political considerations.

A friend who occupies a high position in European diplomacy, and who is in a position to know whereof he speaks, told me that what had really happened was this. Word was received by the Government at Bucharest that the committee's decision was likely to be adverse to Rumania. Thereupon Queen Marie, who is a very adroit and subtle person, wrote to her cousin King George, warning him that if Rumania was compelled to restore the Hungarian lands which it had confiscated, or pay the owners their full value for them, it would inevitably precipitate a revolution in that country, which, as the result of misgovernment and popular discontent, is on the verge of anarchy anyway. Though British sovereigns punctiliously refrain from meddling in politics, it may be assumed that King George communicated the queen's warning to Sir Austen Chamberlain, perhaps with the hint that it might be expedient for the committee to evade so dangerous an issue for the time being. As, even in constitutional England, a royal recommendation carries considerable weight,



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Sir Austen promptly pressed his foot down hard upon the soft pedal. Such is the "inside" story of the incident as it was told to me. You can take it for what it is worth.

No episode in the whole history of the League, not even the weak-kneed vacillation displayed when Corfu was bombarded by the Italians, has done as much as the Chamberlain decision to discredit the great tribunal at Geneva. If this statement is questioned, one has only to read the speeches made in the House of Lords in November, 1927, by the four law lords—Lord Newton, Lord Carson, Lord Buckmaster, and Lord Charnwood—who between them comprise the finest legal talent of the United Kingdom.

The truth of the matter is that the cards are stacked against Hungary at Geneva, a fact which, well known to the diplomatists, affords great glee to the Governments of the Little Entente nations, causes the opponents of the League to shrug their shoulders in cynical amusement, and to its sincere supporters brings discouragement and gloom. Though Sir Austen Chamberlain opposed the Hungarian claim on grounds of political expediency, perhaps in the sincere belief that by so doing he could best serve the cause of European peace if not of international justice, I am inclined to believe that he was not deaf to the counsels of France. Now a great number of French statesmen believe in their hearts that Hungary has a just case, and some of them have had the

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courage openly to espouse it, but the foreign policies of France are largely shaped by a permanent official, the political director of the Foreign Office, who is violently, almost venomously, anti-Hungarian and makes no attempt to conceal it. It was his insistence, I imagine, which caused the French foreign minister, Aristide Briand, to suggest to Baron Koranyi, the Hungarian minister in Paris, that Hungary withdraw her appeal to the League of Nations in the interests of European peace. It is extremely difficult to understand the attitude of the French Government, or of the British Government as represented by Sir Austen Chamberlain, for if their views prevail, and if it is admitted that the Rumanian Government has the legal right to violate her treaty agreements and to confiscate the property of foreigners, a precedent will thereby be established of which certain countries, notably Russia and Mexico, will not be slow to take advantage. The French and British Governments have been violent in denunciation of the soviets for confiscating the properties in Russia of their respective nationals, yet in almost the same breath they affirm the right of the Rumanians to do precisely the same thing. If the Rumanians are within their rights in confiscating the farmlands of Hungarians, why, it may pertinently be asked, are not the Bolsheviki justified in nationalizing French-owned industries, or the Mexicans in seizing British oil-wells? The cases are on all fours. The real gravity of Sir Austen Chamberlain's decision, however, lies

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in the fact that it is a stunning, if not a fatal, blow to the whole system of international arbitration, and, consequently, to the League of Nations.

It is my own conviction that the present situation in Rumania cannot last indefinitely. The late King Ferdinand may not have been a strong ruler, but he was a much more sagacious one than he was commonly credited with being, and he was held in genuine affection by the great mass of the Rumanian people, a fact which enabled him to exercise a moderating influence on the politicians. It was an evil day for Rumania when that influence was taken away, for since the king's death the country has been a battle-ground for rival factions, who seem willing to wreck it in order to achieve their selfish ends. It is common knowledge that many branches of the administration are rotten with corruption; there have been uncovered numerous scandals which have implicated some of the highest in the land; the kingdom seethes with unrest if not with actual sedition; the National Peasants' party is daily growing stronger and more self-assertive; public resentment at the harsh dictatorship of the Bratianu family is steadily increasing; and even the rigid censorship imposed by the Government has failed to stifle the murmurs of dissatisfaction.

Though the late dictator, Jon Bratianu, is supposed to have had the whip and reins firmly in his grasp, he is known to have met with opposition from the Council of Regency, which he himself created

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and was reputed to have held in contempt. This triumvirate, composed of the primate of Rumania, the chief justice of the court of cassation, and Prince Nicholas, the youthful uncle of the boy king, certainly could not be characterized as a strong combination. It is generally understood that Queen Marie was bitterly resentful toward Bratianu for having been excluded from the Council of Regency, and there are many who believe that, in order to regain her power, she was prepared to make common cause with her exiled son, the profligate Carol, from whom, officially at least, she has been estranged. Carol is known to have been in communication with the leaders of the National Peasants' party, and was prepared with their support to defy the Bratianus and make a try for the throne. Those who are familiar with the highly involved political situation are convinced, however, that, rather than see Carol on the throne, Bratianu would have overthrown the monarchy and established a republic, with himself as president-dictator. Be this as it may, it can be said that almost any change in Rumania would be for the better. It is quite conceivable, moreover, that another form of government, particularly if the Peasants' party were in power, might see the wisdom of dealing more generously with the minorities and of taking steps to effect a reconciliation with Hungary.

Hungary is bordered on the north by the post-war republic of Czechoslovakia, which, under the terms of the treaty of Trianon, was permitted to annex vir-



## THE DANGER ON THE DANUBE

tually the whole of Hungarian Slovakia and Ruthenia, the former being inhabited by some 800,000 Hungarians. Though the condition of the Magyars in Czechoslovakia is immeasurably better than that of their brethren in Rumania, their lot is not a happy one and the minorities question is becoming increasingly acute. It is so intertwined, however, with other phases of Czech policy that I shall reserve its discussion for a later chapter.

It is a rather curious thing, when you stop to think about it, that the chancelleries of three nations—Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia—which between them can put into the field upward of three million men, should be kept awake o' nights by the knowledge that among the pupils of a school in an obscure town in Luxemburg is a small boy, Otho Habsburg by name. They are nervous because they know that some millions of Hungarians regard that small boy as their rightful king and are biding the day when on his anointed head will be placed the historic crown of St. Stephen.

The question of the succession is as heatedly debated in Hungary as the prohibition question is in the United States—and will probably be decided about as soon. It is quite erroneous to assume, however, that the Dethronization Act, which was passed by the Hungarian National Assembly in 1921 under pressure from the great powers and the Little Entente, prohibits for all time the assumption by a member of the house of Habsburg of the office of



## EMBATTLED BORDERS

King of Hungary. Let me try to explain the real situation.

When, in 1921, Charles, who had been both Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, made his ill-fated attempt to regain the Hungarian crown, the Council of Ambassadors, acting at the instigation of the Little Entente, insisted upon his definite deposition and his renunciation of all claims to the throne. Charles acceded to this demand, whereupon the National Assembly ruled that the right of choosing his successor reverted to the Hungarian nation; that the throne could not be claimed merely because he was a Habsburg and in the line of succession; and finally that Hungary would remain a kingdom and decide at some future time who should be its king. This declaration did not satisfy the Little Entente nations, however, and at their insistence the Ambassadors' Council asked the Budapest Government to give its pledge that Hungary would never elect a member of the Habsburg family as king. But Count Nicholas Banffy, then foreign minister, instead of complying with this demand, adroitly side-stepped the issue by replying that nothing would be done toward the election of a king "without the assent of the powers represented at the Ambassadors' Council." This means that England, France, and Italy will have the final say and completely ignores the Little Entente.

Now a Habsburg on the Hungarian throne would completely alter the whole political complexion of





WEDDING BELLS IN CASTLE HALLS

The members of the Magyar nobility celebrate marriages with great pomp and splendor, the men frequently wearing their dashing hussar uniforms; the women, Paris gowns, or, less frequently, the beautiful bridal costumes of old Hungary

## THE DANGER ON THE DANUBE

the Danube basin, and the very thought of such an eventuality is a nightmare to the Little Entente. But, as I have just explained, it is a matter for the great powers to decide and the wishes of the Little Entente will be ignored. In order to retain the support of the succession states, France would almost certainly veto a Habsburg restoration. Italy, on the other hand, would probably interpose no objection, if for no other reason than to embarrass France. England, therefore, would hold the deciding vote, though how she would use it is a matter for speculation.

Though the Hungarians are royalists, almost to a man, they are divided into two camps over the question of the succession. Count Albert Apponyi, "the grand old man of Hungary," is the chief of the faction which maintains that Otho is the rightful king, while the prime minister, Count Stephen Bethlen, is the leader of those who stand by the Dethronization Act and demand that the country's next king shall be chosen by election. Bethlen, so it is commonly believed, is opposed to young Otho, who belongs to the Austrian side of the Habsburg family, and is inclined to favor one of the archdukes who represent the Hungarian branch of the house. Nobody seems to know just where the regent, Admiral Horthy, stands, for he has studiously refrained from committing himself on this delicate question; but he, like Count Bethlen, has made it clear that he is unalterably opposed to any attempt to solve it at this time. My own opinion is that, barring some sudden crisis which

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cannot be foreseen, the matter of the succession will be permitted to drag along for a good many years, possibly through the lifetime of Admiral Horthy, thereby averting trouble from without and from within. Meanwhile, by decision of Parliament, Hungary remains a kingdom without a king.

In November, 1926, by decree of the regent, the Hungarian National Assembly became a thing of the past, being succeeded by a parliament consisting of two houses. The upper house, which takes the place of the former House of Magnates, is considerably more democratic in its composition than the old body. It consists of three members of the Palatinate, as the Hungarian branch of the Habsburg family is termed; thirty-eight nobles elected by their own family groups, who correspond to the old hereditary members; some fifty members elected by the county councils and municipalities; nineteen representatives of the Roman Catholic church, eleven of the Protestant, and two of the Jewish faith. The body also includes such dignitaries as the judges of the high court, the attorney-general, the governor of the national bank, the commander-in-chief of the army, and forty elected representatives of scientific institutions, art societies, agricultural bodies, and the stock exchange. Finally, there are forty members appointed for life on the Government's nomination. The lower house consists of 245 members, a comfortable majority being held by the Party of National Unity, of which Count Bethlen is the leader. It



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is significant of the state of political feeling in the country, which has not forgotten the terrors of the Commune, that the Socialists have succeeded in electing only fourteen members of the lower house.

In reviewing the list of members of the upper house one cannot but be struck by the fact that it is one of the few survivals of feudalism to be found in Europe. It is not fair, however, to judge it by western standards, for it is undoubtedly adapted to the conditions existing in Hungary, where the destinies of the peasants are still to a great extent in the benevolent keeping of the great landowners. And with this state of affairs the peasants appear quite content. The truth is that the Hungarians are not democrats and are the only people in Europe who have the nerve to say so.

It is extremely fortunate for Hungary that she has at the head of her government such a man as Admiral Horthy. He is certainly not a great statesman, and perhaps he cannot even be classed as a very brilliant man, but there is no question of his ability, sincerity, and strength of character. His Highness Nicholas Horthy de Nagyanya, governor of Hungary, to give him his full title and name, was born in 1868 at Szolnok in eastern Hungary, his family belonging to the lesser nobility. At the outbreak of the war he was appointed to command the cruiser *Novara* and particularly distinguished himself at the battle of Otranto, when, with three ships, he broke through the Italian cordon blockading the

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

straits and, although severely wounded, remained on deck and continued the fight until he succeeded in bringing his squadron safely to its home port. For this exploit he was awarded the military cross of Maria Theresa, the highest reward for valor in the gift of the Austro-Hungarian Government.

He performed his greatest service to his country, however, by restoring order after the fall of the Communist régime—a task which was done with no light hand by a sailor who regarded the spirit of discipline as more important than the praise of kings or the blame of politicians. But the gravest responsibilities which the regent was called upon to face were the two attempts of the late King Charles to regain the throne of Hungary. When in April, 1921, Charles came to Hungary unarmed, Horthy refused to obey his summons to hand over the reins of government.

When on his second venture, in October of the same year, Charles came with troops against the capital, the regent had no alternative but to fight him and, upon taking him prisoner, to surrender him to the allies. He found himself in the plight of having to decide between an allegiance sworn as admiral and privy councilor to his king, and the oath taken as regent to the National Assembly. That his course was dictated by the highest sense of honor and patriotism no one can justly deny. He had to lead his country through difficulties which few men in history have been called upon to face, and it is small





THE HOME OF A MAGYAR MAGNATE

The Powells, with Count Henry Apponyi and his sister, setting out from Castle Appony for the forest on a Russian shooting-wagon

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wonder that in doing it he had to take drastic measures and has made many enemies.

With his clean-cut features, his erect, active figure, and his outspoken fashion of utterance, Horthy may be described as a typical sailor, a younger edition of the English Admiral Fisher or of our own Robley Evans, though with considerably more tact than either. Frank, simple, and direct in manner, he has a profound contempt for the subterfuges of diplomats and the squabblings of politicians. He is devoted to sport, a fine shot, a brilliant tennis player, an accomplished horseman, and in private intercourse, as I discovered, he possesses to an exceptional degree the kingly faculty of making those with whom he converses feel "at home." But in official life he insists on a strict observance of the ceremonies which appertain to the head of a state that is still a monarchy. When the Hungarians seriously set about the business of finding an occupant for their empty throne they might go much farther and do much worse than to choose Nicholas Horthy.

The directing genius of Hungary's foreign affairs is the prime minister, Count Stephen Bethlen, who, by virtue of the length of time he has held office, is the dean of European premiers. The leader of the party in power and, consequently, the virtual dictator of the political situation, he possesses extraordinary political acumen. Though not a showy statesman, he has led his people through a period of desperately lean and discouraging years, but never-



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theless a period of splendidly successful reconstruction. He has been the moderating and liberalizing influence in the administration and, though a member of the old nobility, he has gone as far in a democratic sense as the situation would permit. But his task has been a delicate and trying one, for Hungary is not a country which can be ruled with either too light or too strong a hand. While nothing is more certain than that he will not permit his country to be led into another military adventure if he can prevent it, and while he has steadfastly refused to let Hungary enter into entangling alliances with other nations, it is equally certain that he will never rest in his efforts to recover its lost territories by every legitimate and peaceful means.

No one, I suppose, believes that the present situation in the valley of the Danube can endure, that the "settlement" made at the Trianon will last very long. It is true that Hungary is dismembered, disarmed, encircled by powerful enemies—but she is potentially dangerous to the peace of the world nevertheless. A nation with a grievance is always a source of danger, particularly if its grievance is justified. The lessons of history cannot safely be ignored. Her oppression of subject peoples cost Spain an empire. Russia's repressive measures in Poland precipitated a whole series of bloody revolutions. Germany's annexation of Alsace-Lorraine made *La Revanche* a French hope and watchword for half a century. Austria's oppression of her Italian minor-

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ities caused Italy to break the Triple Alliance and enter the war on the side of the allies. Turkey's treatment of the Greeks and Armenians aroused world-wide indignation. Yet now, after a war which was waged to abolish such abuses, two nations which gave but negligible aid to the allied cause have been permitted to create *terræ irredentæ* within their borders and thereby lay the foundations for another war.

The more carefully the facts of the situation are studied the plainer it appears that in the near future the map of central Europe must be redrawn. The danger is that if this is delayed too long the redrawing will be done with the bayonet instead of with the pen. Yet I have tried to make it amply clear that, in my opinion, nothing is farther from the intention of the Hungarian Government than to itself precipitate another conflict. Under the stern supervision of Admiral Horthy and Count Bethlen, Hungary has gotten down to hard work; thanks to the sound advice of an American, Mr. Jeremiah Smith, she has been amazingly successful in rehabilitating her finances and putting her house in order. None of the succession states can say as much.

But it is entirely conceivable that a situation might arise which would force the Government to yield to popular opinion. Or, which is more likely, events might so shape themselves that Hungary, merely by remaining neutral, could command her own price, for she occupies a position of enormous strategic

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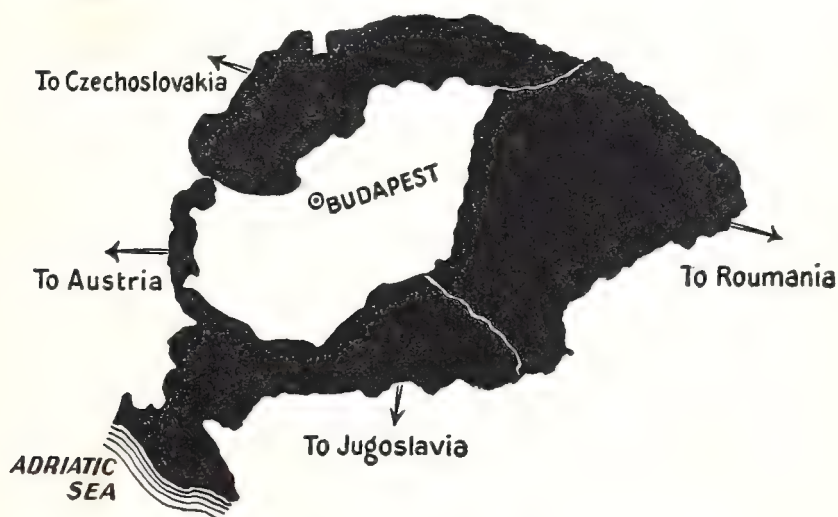
importance at the crossroads of Europe. A war between Italy and Yugoslavia, a revolution in Rumania, a Russian attempt to regain Bessarabia, a split between Czechs and Slovaks, a clash in Albania, another Communist rising in Austria—any of these may come suddenly, at any moment, and any of them might give Hungary her chance.

I have it on the word of men who are exceptionally well informed—foreign military observers for the most part—that there is no justification for the assertions so frequently made by the Governments of the Little Entente that Hungary is secretly preparing for another war and consequently needs close watching. Such an assertion is nonsensical on the face of it. As a matter of fact, owing to dissatisfaction with the prescribed term of enlistment—all recruits must consent to serve for a minimum period of twelve consecutive years—Hungary has experienced considerable difficulty in keeping her military establishment up to the strength permitted her under the treaty—35,000 men. Furthermore, she has no organized reserves, no heavy artillery, indeed, little artillery of any description, no tanks, no airplanes. Yet, in order to protect themselves against this defenseless state, smaller in area than Indiana and smaller than New York in population, the Little Entente deems it necessary to keep under arms nearly half a million men.

The truth of the matter is that by means of skillfully directed propaganda, on which they are spend-

## THE DANGER ON THE DANUBE

ing enormous sums, the governments of the Little Entente have succeeded in lulling western Europe into a sense of false security, in blinding American eyes to what is really going on in the Danube basin. By their greed and oppression Rumania and Czechoslovakia have created on the banks of the Danube two new Alsace-Lorraines. If the allies and the League of Nations continue to neglect these festering sores, then nothing is more certain than that war-fever will set in. Unless the voice of western public opinion makes itself heard before it is too late, unless the doctors at Geneva are prompt to take remedial measures Europe will have another war on its hands.



WHAT HUNGARY LOST BY THE TREATY OF TRIANON



## CHAPTER V

### CASTLES, CROWNS, AND AN EMPTY THRONE

WHEN my friend Count Apponyi, who is a Hungarian magnate and a famous sportsman, invited us to visit him at his ancestral seat in the Carpathians, we accepted eagerly, for even in the valley of the Danube, which is dotted with the imposing homes of the Magyar nobility, there are not many such places as Castle Appony left. For the old Europe, the Europe of feudal castles and baronial halls, of parks and game preserves, of green-coated foresters and retainers in mediæval liveries, with its picturesque and colorful life, of which Anthony Hope wrote so entertainingly in "The Prisoner of Zenda," is rapidly disappearing, and ere long, like the old West, it will have gone beyond recall.

"It is quite easy to find my place," wrote the count. "It is only about two hundred kilometers from Budapest—an easy day's run by motor—and, in order that you may have no difficulty in finding the road, I am sending you a list of the towns through which you will pass."

But we soon discovered that there is a vast difference between locating a country house in Virginia or on Long Island, where there are always motorists



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and police from whom to ask the way, and finding one hidden amid the black forests of Slovakia, particularly as I have no knowledge of either Slovak or Hungarian, which are the only languages the peasants of that region understand.

Before leaving Budapest I had taken the precaution of providing myself with a road-map, but the names on the map were in German, whereas the Government of Czechoslovakia, in which country the count's properties are now situated, in an excess of nationalistic fervor had torn down the old Austro-Hungarian road signs and replaced them with new ones written in Czech, a language which to American eyes looks like an alphabetical explosion. How, I ask you, were we to know that Pressburg had been rechristened Bratislava; that Carlsbad had become Karlovy Vary; that Budweis had been distorted into Budějovice České; that Jungbunzlau was camouflaged as Mladá Boleslav; that Prossnitz masqueraded as Pro-tějov; and that the old German town of Eger was now known as Cheb? Even Appony, which was our destination, had been renamed Oponice. It was as though, upon starting on a tour through New England, one found that the familiar Anglo-Saxon place-names had been replaced by their original Indian appellations.

As the result of the delays involved in making numerous inquiries and in following what usually proved to be misdirections, the approach of night-fall found us some fourscore miles to the east of the

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

Danube on a lonely forest road in the heart of Slovakia, as completely lost as it was possible to be in a civilized but sparsely settled country.

"As it is getting late," my wife suggested, "don't you think that we had better go back to Bratislava for the night and make a fresh start in the morning?"

Having no wish to spend the night in the forest, or in a peasant's hut, I was about to follow her suggestion, when I spied a solitary figure approaching us along the dusty and otherwise deserted road. As the man drew opposite the car I accosted him in my best German.

"Bitte, mein Herr, sprechen Sie Deutsch?"

He shook his head dumbly and glanced at me with suspicion. Then, catching sight of the American license-plate on the car, he suddenly became articulate.

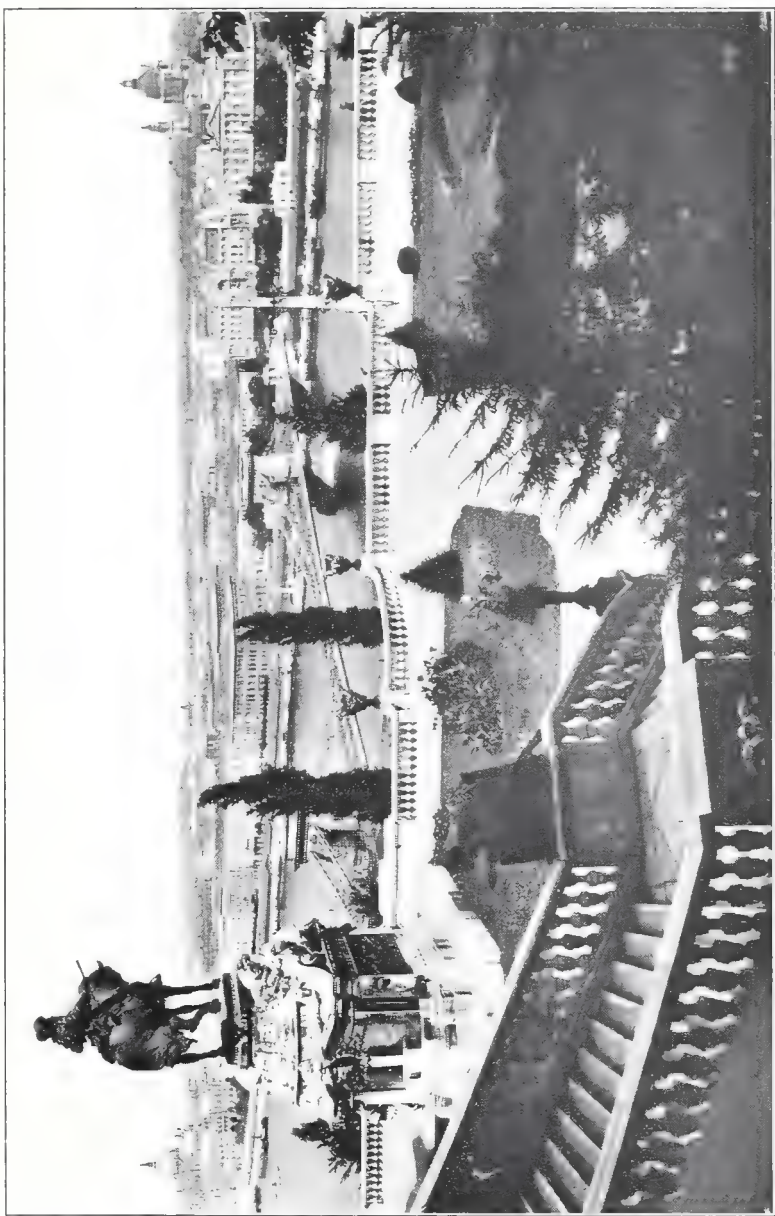
"I spik Ingleesh," he volunteered.

Those three words were as welcome as a letter from home.

"The devil you do!" I exclaimed joyfully. "Where did you learn English?"

"I live in 'Merica fourteen year," he answered proudly. "I work in coal mine by Scranton. 'Merica one dam fine country, mister. I go back there bimeby."

"Perhaps you can tell me," I said hopefully, "how to get to Count Apponyi's place. "He lives somewhere near here, I think, but I've lost my way."



THE PALACE WITHOUT A KING

Its terraces command a superb view of the great river—not particularly blue—beyond which unrolls the panorama of Pest



## CASTLES, CROWNS, AND AN EMPTY THRONE

“Sure ting, mister,” was the comforting reply. “I know hees place. He live on other side this mountain in helluva big house with high wall all round it. You find it all right if you stick to this road for nine-ten mile.”

I pressed my foot on the throttle and the motor rose from a purr into a roar.

“Well, so long mister,” called my informant. “Good luck!”

“Good luck to *you!*” said I.

As we drove away I heard him mutter, a touch of homesickness in his voice, “One dam fine country, ’Merica.”

His directions proved adequate, and half an hour later, after picking our way through the straggling and deeply rutted main street of a squalid Slovak village, our progress repeatedly interrupted by enormous flocks of huge white geese in charge of quaintly attired goose-girls, I sounded my horn before a pair of impressive coronet-surmounted gates.

In response to the raucous summons a pretty peasant girl, so quaintly charming in her bright green skirt and gayly flowered bodice that she might have stepped straight from a light opera chorus, emerged from a vine-clad lodge to swing open the ponderous iron gates. Before us stretched a winding mile-long drive, over which the branches of venerable trees interlaced to form a continuous canopy of green. We kept on and on, the road seemingly without end, until, quite abruptly, the trees gave way to an ex-



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panse of velvety greensward, beyond which rose the château itself—an enormous U-shaped structure, two stories in height, with a mediæval clock-tower looking down upon a graveled courtyard in which a squadron of cavalry could have been drawn up—and probably had been in times past.

As the gravel crunched beneath our tires our host, a brown-bearded, sun-bronzed, jovial man in shooting-jacket and knickerbockers, came running out to greet us. He was followed by a brace of grizzled family retainers in the picturesque liveries affected by the great Hungarian families—short blue jackets frogged and embroidered in scarlet, scarlet cravats with silver fringe, tight blue breeches, and high Magyar boots. These, with two or three green-clad foresters who were summoned to look after the luggage, provided the mediæval touch for which I had been hoping. I felt that it would have been more fitting if we had arrived in a four-horse post-chaise. In such a setting the big yellow car seemed strangely out of place.

I have arrived at more than one country place in America to be informed by the butler that our host and hostess would meet us at dinner, but that is not the Hungarian idea of hospitality. Though we were three hours late, an elaborate high tea was awaiting us on the terrace, and after that had been disposed of, our host and his sister themselves showed us to our rooms. These were situated in a wing of the château overlooking the gardens and immediately above

## CASTLES, CROWNS, AND AN EMPTY THRONE

the chapel, a vaulted stone-flagged sanctuary which had been built about the time that an Italian navigator named Cristoforo Colombo was engaged in discovering that New World from which we came. In this ancient chapel, through whose stained-glass windows filtered a mellow rosy light, generations of the count's family had been baptized, married, buried; and here on Sunday mornings the village chaplain still says mass for the members of the household.

Later on, by the simple expedient of counting my steps, I measured the distance from our rooms to the front door of the château. I found that it was something over four hundred paces, or not far from a quarter of a mile. So that when my wife forgot her handkerchief or my daughter wanted her cigarette case it involved something more than running upstairs and down again.

"How many rooms have you?" I asked our host in astonishment, after we had traversed a bewildering series of corridors whose walls were covered from floor to ceiling with rare old etchings, engravings, and sporting prints.

"I really don't know," he said carelessly. "I've never had occasion to count them. Leaving out the servants' quarters, there must be close to a hundred rooms."

"Is the château ever filled?" inquired my wife.

"Oh, quite often during the summer, when all our relatives, with their children and servants, come on,"

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

was the reply, "and occasionally during the shooting season. Sometimes, as at Christmas, when we have a really big house-party, as many as forty places are set in the dining-room."

"But what on earth do you do for servants?" I asked. "Surely it isn't easy to assemble so large a staff, particularly as you are a long way from a city. Where do you get them?"

"I'll tell you," his sister answered for him. "It's really quite simple. The people who live in the village which you saw just outside our gates are in our employ, as their parents and grandparents were before them. Ordinarily they work in the fields, or as gamekeepers and foresters, but when we need extra help in the house we call them in, put them into livery, and they manage quite well. Of course they are not highly trained servants, such as you have, I suppose, in America, but they are very faithful and honest and always do their best."

During our stay at Castle Appony we always breakfasted in our apartment—the suite assigned to us consisted of seven sleeping-, dressing-, and sitting-rooms, with a bathroom as spacious as many a New York flat—and we usually lunched *al fresco* in the forest; but the evening meal in the great dining-hall was an experience not readily forgotten. I always had the feeling that I was on a stage set for a play. The oak-paneled walls, mellowed by time and waxing to the color of a much-smoked meerschaum, were hung with portraits of long-dead Apponyis—



FOUR-IN-HANDS AT BABOLNA

We were driven to the round-up in vehicles like American buckboards, each drawn by four white stallions





## CASTLES, CROWNS, AND AN EMPTY THRONE

nobles, warriors, statesmen—and with the antlers of stags and other trophies of the chase. The small candle-illuminated table formed an island of light in a sea of gloom, amid which the servants, in their fantastic Old World costumes, flitted silently like ghosts from an ancient past.

Coffee and cigarettes were served on the terrace, beneath the stars, the silence broken only by the pleasant plash of water in the fountain, the vagrant night breeze whispering among the tree-tops, the snatches of wild Magyar music from the village without the walls. When the air grew too chill for comfort we would retire to the library, a magnificent apartment, fifty yards in length, entirely encircled by a wooden gallery and lined from floor to ceiling with books—thirty-five thousand volumes in all, including more than a score of incunabula, as books printed in the fifteenth century are termed.

At one end of the room was a full-length painting of the count's grandfather in the fur-trimmed scarlet robes of a knight of the Golden Fleece; at the other a picture of the coronation of Emperor Francis Joseph as King of Hungary, with the figure of our host's father, resplendent in his uniform of grand chamberlain, conspicuous in the foreground. And everywhere, on the walls and bookcases and tables, were autographed photographs of the great ones—emperors, kings, princes, nobles, field marshals, prime ministers, ambassadors—who called the Apponyis cousins or friends.

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

“Are you interested in autographs, by any chance?” inquired the count one evening, tossing a bulging portfolio carelessly upon the table. “These are some which my grandfather collected. He was fond of that sort of thing.”

I opened the portfolio—and gasped. Here were faded parchments bearing the sprawling signatures of all the sovereigns of France who bore the name of Louis, from the canonized king who died at Carthage on the last crusade to the one who died in the Place de la Concorde beneath the guillotine. Here were letters from Wallenstein, Gustavus Adolphus, Marlborough, Wellington, Napoleon; from Richelieu, Mazarin, and Talleyrand; from Keats, Shelley, Scott, and Byron. Here, too, was a love letter from Nelson to Lady Hamilton. And at the very last, under the W’s, I came upon a yellowed epistle addressed to “Gouverneur Morris, esqre” and dated at Mount Vernon. It bore the signature “G. Washington.” It has been in the possession of the Apponyi family for nearly a century, and I doubt if the collectors of Washingtoniana are even aware of its existence.

“Before we forget it,” said the countess, “you must write your names in our guest-book,” and she opened on the desk a ponderous leather-bound volume as large as a ledger. As my daughter was idly turning the leaves to glance at the earlier signatures she gave a little cry of astonishment. No wonder that she exclaimed, for near the top of the first page was

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a cramped and boyish scrawl, "Duc de Reichstadt," and the date, 1831. After all, it is a little disconcerting to be asked to write your name beneath that of the unhappy little King of Rome, the only child of Napoleon and Marie Louise—the most pathetic and romantic figure in modern history. Only a few days before we had stood beside his bronze sarcophagus in the crypt of the Capuchin church in Vienna.

"Oh, yes," said Apponyi matter-of-factly when we called his attention to it, "the poor kid frequently came here in my great-grandfather's time. I expect that Appony was a welcome change from his prison-like existence at Schönbrunn."

Wherever I turned in that great house I had the feeling that I was rubbing elbows with the ghosts of history.

But our host regarded his priceless collections of books, autographs, and pictures quite casually. It was easy to see that his real interests were centered in his gun-room. Here, in the glass cases which lined the walls, reposed the sporting weapons, ranging from double-barreled elephant rifles to beautifully damascened fowling-pieces, which he had used in half the game fields of the world. From the tops of the cases to the ceiling the walls were covered with the heads of animals which had fallen to his gun—bear from the Urals, moufflon from the Taurus, lion from the Sudan, and beautifully mounted antlers of the stags which he had shot in European forests.

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

Below each of the bleached skulls hung a small shield which bore in Gothic script the place and date of the animal's death.

Deer-shooting, to most Americans, means a fortnight's trip to Canada or the North Woods and a lot of hard work for the one or two animals which the law allows them. It is not easy for them to understand, therefore, how seriously the sport is taken on the great estates of central Europe and as jealously guarded, poaching being regarded as considerably more heinous than manslaughter.

From the day when, as a lad in his early 'teens, he is given his first rifle, every European sportsman keeps a meticulous list of the game he shoots in a book made for the purpose, with separate columns for stags, roe deer, wild boar, bear, chamois, pheasants, grouse, and so on. The shooting-book of our host's cousin, Count Karolyi, shows that 515,000 head of game were killed on his estate in a period of thirty years, with never more than eight guns. While shooting on his cousin's estate, Count Apponyi was one of eight guns who made the record bag of 6855 pheasants in a single day. To an American, who thinks himself lucky if he gets half a dozen birds in a day's shooting, this sounds like slaughter, which it is; yet the fact remains that as a result of scientific breeding and the careful protection of the young birds the game tends to increase rather than decrease. It might be added that the game thus killed provides the owner with a considerable source of







IN THE LAND OF THE LITTLE RUSSIANS

The Ruthenians are a poor folk and their houses, though extremely picturesque, are usually miserable structures—whitewashed timbers below, unpainted boards above, and a roof untidily thatched with straw. In the loft, reached by a ladder, are stored provisions for the winter. A shrine, resembling an overgrown grandfather's clock, stands near the entrance to every village

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revenue, being sold at high prices in the markets of Vienna, Berlin, and Budapest.

It would seem to most people that a forest of sixteen thousand acres would be amply sufficient to satisfy the sporting proclivities of any one, yet when we were at Castle Appony our host was seeking to lease from his next-door neighbor an additional four thousand acres for the autumn shooting. The negotiations were somewhat difficult, however, owing to the pronounced eccentricities of the nobleman in question. Having become convinced that the Czechs, who are now masters of the land, are plotting his assassination, he never stirs beyond the threshold of his castle unless attired in a steel cap and cuirass, with a brace of ancient horse-pistols strapped to his waist. There was always a certain element of adventure involved in approaching his dwelling, for the chances were at least even that he would suspect us of being Czechs and therefore enemies and take a few pot-shots at us by way of precaution. To come suddenly upon this mailed and bearded knight, astride a great white horse, riding down a lonely forest glade, gave me the feeling that, like Mark Twain's Connecticut Yankee, I had been suddenly transported from the twentieth century to "days of old, when knights were bold, and barons held their sway."

The count's nearest neighbor on the other side dwelt in a stone castle perched upon a mountain-top about a dozen miles away, from which he occasion-

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ally motored over to Appony for dinner and an evening of bridge.

“A nice fellow,” the count remarked, “and a keen sportsman. But he is not really one of us, of course. Quite a newcomer, in fact. His family only settled here two hundred years ago.”

I thought with a smile how parvenu must seem to him a family like my own, which has occupied the same house in America for only about a century and a half!

I have neglected to mention that the château of Appony is comparatively modern, most of it having been built early in the eighteenth century, though portions of it, including the chapel, date back to the Middle Ages. The original Castle Appony, or what remains of it, for it is now but a vine-clad ruin, is perched on a lofty crag, two miles or so from the château, having been built by the founder of the house when he came riding out of Asia at the head of his horde of nomad horsemen toward the end of the eighth century. Yet we Americans reckon ourselves of ancient stock if we had an ancestor who came over in the *Mayflower*, or own a house which dates back to the Revolution. This lineage business, of which we all like to boast now and then, is, after all, largely a matter of comparison.

The days at Appony passed all too quickly—lovely, lazy, summer days with never a telephone-bell to disturb their utter serenity. After a morning spent in loafing about the gardens or in visiting the stables,

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we usually set out for the forest, the whole party aboard a Russian shooting-wagon. This curious vehicle, peculiar to eastern Europe, consists of two pairs of wheels between which is slung a long cushioned plank, the passengers being seated astride, their feet resting on rails on either side, exactly as on an old-fashioned bob-sled. Scattered through the forest were numerous trout ponds, where foresters awaited us with rods, for it was too early for the shooting. At nightfall, the creels heavy with speckled beauties, we turned our faces homeward, rattling and rocking along the narrow pine-strewn roads, with the stars gleaming in a purple velvet sky and the lights of the château twinkling in the valley below us.

When the morning came on which we were to resume our journey, and we had waved good-by to the count and his sister and the line of smiling, bowing, picturesquely clad retainers, I felt a pang of real regret as the lodge gates clanged behind us. After a visit to the Middle Ages this modern world seemed a little prosaic and humdrum.

While we were in Hungary we were invited to spend a few days on another great estate near Arcs, the property of the Countess Zichy, a most fascinating old noblewoman who, in the days of the monarchy, had been a lady-in-waiting to the Empress Elizabeth. Here was none of the mediæval atmosphere we had found at Castle Appony. The eighteenth-century château had been remodeled and completely modernized, with steam heat, running water,



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and numerous bathrooms. The servants were carefully trained, and the dinner service, of rare old Meissen, would have made a porcelain collector gasp with envy. It should have been in a museum.

To sit of a morning in the countess's chintz-hung, picture-littered boudoir and listen to her anecdotes of the great ones she had known so intimately, and of life at the Vienna court, was like listening to unwritten chapters of European history. And, unlike the numerous "memoirs" which have been published, most of them compounded of scandalous rumors and back-stairs gossip, we knew that what the Countess Zichy told us was authentic—that, instead of being a looker-on, she had herself played a rôle, if a minor one, in the Habsburg drama.

I remember her telling of the tragic little scene which was staged on the platform of the local railway station, hard by the gates of the château, when, in the autumn of 1921, the Emperor Charles and the Empress Zita, who had been in exile in Switzerland, made their unsuccessful attempt, supported by a few-score adherents, to enter Hungary and by a sudden *coup d'état* regain possession of the crown of St. Stephen.

"Their train had been compelled to stop here," the countess explained, "because the rails just ahead had been torn up. As soon as I learned of their Majesties' presence I hurried down to the station to greet them. Though it was a bitterly cold day, neither the emperor nor the empress was warmly clad, so I



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came back to the château and got them some heavy garments. Meanwhile discouraging reports had come in, and when I returned to the station I found the poor young emperor in the depths of gloom, unable to decide whether he should continue to the capital or return to Switzerland.

“ ‘Don’t waste precious time waiting for the rails to be relaid, your Majesty,’ I begged of him. ‘Leave your soldiers here. You and the empress take my automobile and drive on to Budapest alone. Go straight to the palace. No one will stop you. Appear on the balcony and tell your people that you have come to place yourselves in their hands. And then feed them, feed them, feed them. They are hungry there in Budapest, desperately hungry, and your Majesty may be sure that they would rather be well-fed royalists than starving republicans.’

“ ‘But he wouldn’t take my advice,’ she continued, sadly. ‘He told me that he couldn’t desert his faithful followers. So, when the rails had been replaced, he continued toward the capital. You know the rest. A few miles outside the city his little force was routed by the troops of Admiral Horthy and the emperor was taken prisoner, to die a year later in Madeira, a king without a throne or even a home.’”

While we were at Arcs we drove over one day to the famous horse-breeding establishment, founded in 1798, which is maintained by the Government at Babolna. The minister of agriculture had notified the director of our visit and for our benefit a horse

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show had been arranged. As one of the semi-annual auction sales of surplus stock was to be held shortly, the horses—there are about eight hundred at Babolna—were in the pink of condition.

The small Magyar horse, once famous for its swiftness and endurance, was improved during the Turkish wars, so far as height and beauty were concerned, by being crossed with Arabs; but it degenerated after the seventeenth century as a result of injudicious cross-breeding. The Hungarian horse has since been brought up to a very high standard, however, by government action, the establishment of state studs supported by parliamentary grants, and the importation of carefully selected stallions, particularly the thoroughbreds brought from England and the hunter sires purchased in Ireland. The largest of the government studs is that at Mezö-Kovesd, founded in 1785, in southern Hungary, which at the outbreak of the war had nearly two thousand five hundred horses, but many of its best animals were taken by the Rumanians when they looted the country in 1919.

It is an interesting fact that the first director of the stud at Babolna was a Turk, who, when a small boy, came to Hungary with an importation of Arab horses—a gift, I believe, from the sultan. He was educated at the expense of the emperor, who took a great fancy to the alert, intelligent little lad, rose to the rank of general in the imperial service, and devoted his energies and his influence at court to devel-

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oping what has become one of Hungary's chief industries.

I doubt if any government in the world, let alone any private breeder, could show such a superb collection of animals as were led before us, with much cracking of whips, at Babolna. When I saw these spirited, slim-limbed, satin-coated animals (rather light of bone, it is true, according to American ideas) it was easy to understand why for centuries the Hungarian hussars were admittedly the best mounted and most mobile light cavalry in Europe.

At the conclusion of the elaborate luncheon which had been prepared for us, with that rarest of all wines, Imperial Tokay, in the comfortable club-house which is maintained for the use of the officials, we were driven out to the pastures to see the brood-mares, several hundreds of which had been rounded up for our inspection by the *csiskos*, or horsemen, in the picturesque dress worn by the riders of the great Hungarian plain. Swinging their lariats above their heads, cracking their long-lashed whips with reports like pistol-shots, the *csiskos* galloped madly across the prairie with the skill and daring of our own cowboys. The vehicles in which we were driven out to the round-up were of the type used on those estates whose owners stubbornly resist the encroachments of the motor-car: six-seated affairs, built like American buckboards, each drawn by four white stallions, their harness gay with red and silver trappings. When we debouched into the open country the

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drivers cracked their long whips between the ears of the leaders, the horses broke into a run, and we went tearing across the grassy pasturelands in the maddest of mad races. I have seldom had a more thrilling ride.

Before leaving Hungary we had an opportunity to see at close range the assembled aristocracy of the country at a garden party given by the Regent and Madame Horthy at the royal palace in Buda. It was one of the few large affairs that Admiral Horthy has seen fit to give, for he takes the position that he is merely a ruler *ad interim*, a steward for an exiled king, and is extremely careful not to do anything which might be interpreted by the royalists as tending to perpetuate his rule or which might suggest that he sought to assume royal privileges.

While undeniably imposing, the great palace—it is said to contain eight hundred and sixty rooms—is not an edifice of any extraordinary beauty, but its setting is wholly satisfying. Standing on a lofty hill of its own, it is surrounded by magnificent gardens which descend in steep terraces to the Danube. When viewed from the river, or from Pest, which is on the eastern bank, it forms a fitting center for the splendid panorama of Buda, whose precipitous slopes are crowded with churches, government buildings, and private residences, and whose skyline is broken by innumerable towers and spires.

The original palace was built about the middle of the fifteenth century by King Matthias the Just and





A WOODEN CHURCH OF RUTHENIA

The people of Ruthenia, a region of mountains and forests in the easternmost part of Czechoslovakia, are Little Russians and belong to the Uniate Church





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Magnificent, one of the greatest kings who ever reigned. The Turks destroyed it. Maria Theresa, by way of acknowledging her obligations to the Hungarians, built it up again. Her edifice was partly burned in 1849, but in quite recent years it was restored and largely extended. Though it is one of the finest royal residences in Europe, the Emperor Francis Joseph seldom visited it—perhaps because he did not like the Hungarians—and spent only a few days there each year. Now Admiral Horthy and his household occupy a small corner of the enormous building, but it is always kept in immaculate order against the coming of the next king.

In the chapel of the palace are preserved the regalia of the kingdom of Hungary—the scepter, orb, sword, robes, and, of course, the venerated crown of St. Stephen. If you have ever had occasion to examine the arms of Hungary you may possibly have noticed that the cross on the crown which surmounts them is slightly askew. This is not due to carelessness on the part of the jeweler or the engraver. It is the result of a historic accident. When the Turks captured Budapest in the sixteenth century and sacked the city, the regalia was hastily packed in a chest and buried for safekeeping. When the Turks had been driven out and the chest was reopened, it was found that the lid had bent the cross on St. Stephen's crown. And bent it has remained ever since.

Most palace garden parties are unconscionably

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stiff and stupid affairs, at which no one finds comfort or enjoyment, but this was a gratifying exception. Admiral Horthy and his beautiful wife received their guests at the entrance to the upper terrace, greeting them as cordially as though they were old and valued friends. Moreover, every one seemed to know every one else, for all the members of the Hungarian nobility are interrelated by blood or marriage, and as we knew the Apponyis and Zichys and some others, and were introduced by them to their uncles and aunts and cousins, we were quickly made to feel at home. Indeed, I know of no other people, not excepting my own, who have such charm of manner as the upper class Hungarians, or who have such a knack for making strangers feel as though they were among friends.

Of all the aristocracies of Europe, the Hungarians are not only the most distinguished in appearance but they are by far the best dressed. They have a positive flair for clothes and one rarely sees a woman who is dowdy-looking. The men wore beautifully cut morning-coats with *bouttonnières* of gardenias or violets, and white spats, and silk or gray "toppers," so that I was reminded of the scene in the royal inclosure at Ascot on Gold Cup day. The women, many of whom were very beautiful and nearly all of whom were noticeably chic, wore gowns which might have come from the Rue de la Paix but more probably came from the equally smart modistes of Vienna. Mingling with these, and lending to

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the animated scene a pleasing touch of color, were officers in the gorgeous pre-war uniforms of the Hungarian cavalry regiments, and a little group of village mayors and provincial functionaries in the dashing Magyar dress—round hats with feathers slanting rakishly in the brims, short blue jackets covered with yards and yards of soutache braid, skin-tight breeches, and knee-high polished boots. Though of the bourgeois class, well-to-do land-owners for the most part, they were dignified and wholly at their ease, appearing quite unimpressed by their surroundings.

I must devote a few words to the halberdiers, because, barring the Yeomen of the Guard—or, as they are better known, the “Beef-Eaters”—who are on duty at the English court on ceremonial occasions, there is nothing resembling them left in post-war Europe. They are a picturesque survival of Hungary’s glorious and glittering past. Beneath sleeveless, cream-colored, gold-incrusted surcoats they wear scarlet doublets and long-hose which terminate in pointed red-topped shoes. The most striking feature of their singular costume, however, is the head-dress, a pointed steel cap, damascened in gold, with towering spike and snowy plume—a copy, I imagine, of the helmets worn by the Magyar warriors in the days of Matthew the Magnificent. Some of these gigantic guardsmen paced up and down the terraces, halberd on shoulder; others stood before the doors of the palace, motionless as statues. Halberds and

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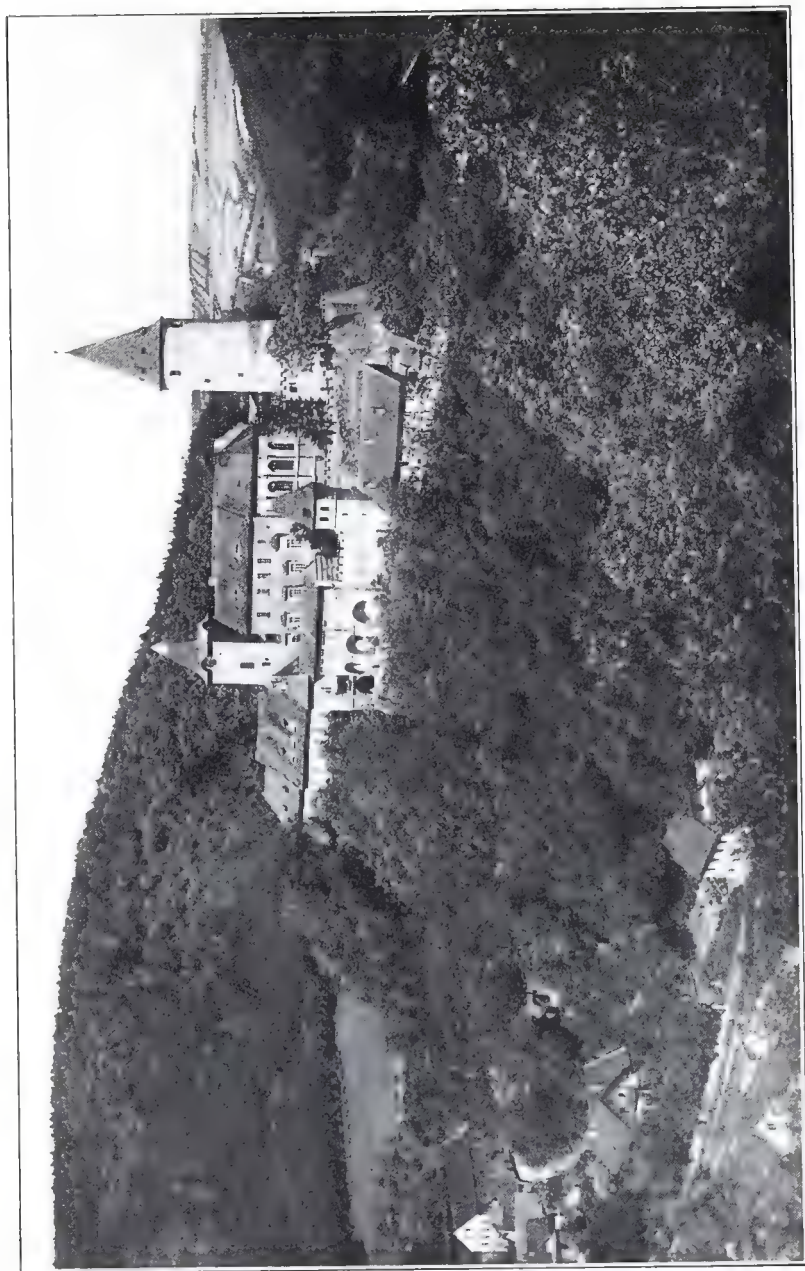
canes, scarlet long-hose and striped trousers, steel helmets and silk hats—how curious a contrast!

When darkness fell, the lights in the palace were turned on and the guests thronged into the throne-room, with its crystal-and-silver chandeliers and candelabra and its half acre of polished floor. It was the first time that it had been thrown open since the collapse of the monarchy; the state ballroom, they told us, will not be used until the coming of the king. From the gallery came the strains of Gipsy music—and let me tell you that you don't know what dance music can be like until you have heard it played by a Tzigany orchestra. My daughter floated down the floor in the arms of a young officer of hussars resplendent in sky-blue and silver; my wife accepted the invitation of a dignified official of the Foreign Office. Thus left to my own devices, I sought the buffet, where a row of servitors with the dignity of ambassadors condescendingly dispensed caviare sandwiches and champagne punch.

It was a very beautiful affair, and, as the small town society reporters put it, an enjoyable time was had by one and all. But in the minds and hearts of those who were present—most of them ardent royalists—there hovered, I imagine, the picture of a little boy who is being educated in an obscure Luxemburg town. His name is Otho, and this great palace in which we were is *his* palace, so most Hungarians contend, and the empty throne at one end of the glittering ballroom is *his* throne, and one day,







WHERE BARONS HELD THEIR SWAY

Castle Krivoklat, in Bohemia

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it is hoped, he will come back to his palace and sit on his throne and a cardinal in scarlet robes will place on his curly head the ancient crown of St. Stephen.

## CHAPTER VI

### BE A BOHEMIAN!

“**T**HE name Czechoslovakia,” remarked a witty American diplomat with whom I was dining in Prague, “has cost that country an additional 1 per cent. on its foreign loans.” The statement is doubtless an exaggeration, but there is a kernel of truth in it none the less, for there is no denying that to western ears the name has a barbaric sound and to most people suggests the Balkans. But, like so many things in post-war Europe, it is a political compromise, for the Czechs would have preferred to have called the new state Bohemia, which is the historic name of the portion they inhabit, but their partners, the Slovaks, insisted on being given a full share in the firm name. It was an unfortunate choice, however, if for no other reason than that it connotes a hybrid country, which of course it is, in spite of Czech assertions to the contrary.

The Czechoslovak Republic is one of the youngest countries in the world, having come into existence as an independent state on October 28, 1918. Situated in the geographical center of the European Continent, it forms the borderland between the German and the Slavonic worlds—or a bridge, if you wish to

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see it that way—the peoples which it embraces having played leading parts in the cultural development of Europe for centuries.

Ethnographically, the republic consists of five divisions: Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia, and Ruthenia, though the latter enjoys, at least in theory, a large measure of autonomy. It embraces, in short, the group of old Slavonic states which, though for centuries a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, preserved their nationality in spite of the fact that they had lost their political independence.

Though the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, from the flank of which Czechoslovakia was carved, was an ethnographic hodge-podge, the new republic itself is by no means a homogeneous nation. The figures of no two authorities agree, but it seems within the bounds of truth to assert that of the country's total population, which is somewhat in excess of fourteen millions, probably not more than three sevenths are Czechs and one seventh Slovaks. If these two peoples are really one, as the Czechs insist and the Slovaks deny, then they form a slight majority of the inhabitants. The balance of the population consists of Germans, who number about 3,125,000; between 740,000 and 800,000 Magyars, depending upon which set of statistics you accept; 462,000 Ruthenians, together with a considerable number of Poles, Jews, and various other races.

It is perfectly true that the Slavonic race is in an overwhelming majority in Czechoslovakia, but as it



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is divided into a number of peoples differing from one another in language, religion, culture, customs, and historical traditions—though these differences are often slight—it does not possess a national unity in the generally accepted sense of that term. For example, the Czechs and Slovaks speak languages which, though more or less similar, are nevertheless distinct tongues, the difference being bridged by the transitional dialects of Moravia. The Ruthenians—the name, which is a form of the word “Russian,” is applied to those of the Little Russians who were Austrian subjects—speak the language of the Ukraine. In western Bohemia and in Silesia the predominant language is German. To still further complicate the linguistic problem, there are numerous German-speaking enclaves situated in purely Czech districts. It might be mentioned, parenthetically, that the Czech language is greatly indebted to John Hus, whose best and most original works were written in the language of his country. It was the great Bohemian reformer who introduced the system of so-called diacritic marks—such as *c*, *u*, *y*—for he realized that it was quite impossible to reproduce in Latin characters some of the sounds peculiar to Slav tongues. After attempting to decipher some of the signs written in the language perfected by Hus it is easy to understand why they burned him.

The Czechs, who are not a particularly religious people, are nominally Roman Catholics, and so are most of the Slovaks, but there are also a good many





All dressed up and nowhere to go—but church. Village dandies of Lokca



Waiting at the church. Village girls of Spis in their Sunday-go-to-meeting garments

SUNDAY MORNING IN SLOVAKIA

## BE A BOHEMIAN!

Protestants in Slovakia, while the Ruthenians belong to the Uniate church, which is closely allied to the Greek communion. According to the latest census, more than 5 per cent. of the inhabitants of Czechoslovakia have no religion. Culturally, a deep gulf separates the Czechs from the Slovaks and Ruthenians, the well-educated, highly intelligent natives of Bohemia having little in common with the stolid, slow-thinking Slovak peasants or with the even less advanced Ruthenians. Whatever their differences, however, whether linguistic, religious, or cultural, the fact remains that the Czechs of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, and the Slovaks of Slovakia comprise branches of the same Slav nation.

The Czechs appear to have made themselves masters of Bohemia as early as the fifth century, and for upward of twelve hundred years that country remained a Czech kingdom. Its independence was brought to a temporary end, however, on November 8, 1620, when the armies of the Holy Roman Empire crushed the Bohemian forces at the battle of the White Mountain. The conquest of Bohemia, which was the first episode in the Thirty Years' War, was precipitated when the Protestant nobles of Bohemia, roused by the attempts of the Roman Catholic church to recover its ancient hold over the country, refused to elect the Archduke Ferdinand to the vacant throne and offered it instead to the Elector Frederick. Thereupon the powerful Maximilian of Bavaria joined his forces to those of Ferdinand, who

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had meanwhile become emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and the latter also received aid from Spain, Poland, and several of the Italian states. This overwhelming array invaded Bohemia, advanced upon Prague, and carried by storm the fortified position on the plateau known as the Bila Hora, or White Mountain, where the Bohemians made their final stand.

Because this battle marked an epoch in the history of Bohemia it is as frequently referred to in that country as the battle of Lexington is in the United States, and in the events which immediately succeeded it are to be found the reasons for many of the policies pursued by the Czechoslovak Government. A period of three hundred years, lacking only a few months, intervened between the fall of the Bohemian kingdom and the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic—a sufficiently ample space of time, it would seem, to permit of ancient grudges and historic hatreds being forgotten—yet the modern Czechs speak of those long-past events as though they had happened yesterday. Perhaps it is because, all down the centuries between, they have nursed their wrath to keep it warm.

No sooner had Ferdinand made himself master of the country than he ordered the execution of the principal Bohemian leaders and the wholesale confiscation of the lands of all who had in any way opposed him. Almost the entire ancient nobility of Bohemia was driven into exile, and adventurers



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from all countries, mostly men who had served in the imperial armies, shared the spoils. This explains why the vast majority of the great estates in Bohemia are to-day in the possession of families bearing German, Polish, Spanish, and even Italian names, and it also explains, in some measure at least, why the Czechs are seeking to deprive those families of their lands.

Gradually all those who refused to accept the creed of the church of Rome were expelled from Bohemia, and by the employment of cruelties which rivaled those of the Inquisition, Catholicism was firmly reëstablished in the land. The country was forced to accept a new constitution which made the Bohemian crown hereditary in the house of Habsburg, the Diet was deprived of all legislative power, and it was decreed that the German language should be placed on an equality with the Czech in all the government offices and law-courts of the kingdom. This had indeed become a necessity, since, in consequence of the vast number of confiscations, the greater part of the land was in the hands of foreigners to whom the national language was unknown. Though these enactments left to Bohemia a certain measure of autonomy, the country gradually lost its individuality, its history from this moment until the outbreak of the World War being but a part of the history of Austria, whose emperors were automatically also Bohemian kings.

Though the Czech nation, as I have shown, was

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deprived of its independence for three hundred years, it never abandoned the hope of eventually recovering it, a hope which the Austrians could never completely extinguish in spite of their systematic attempts to effectually Germanize the country. The Czechs were quick to realize, therefore, that the outcome of the World War would have a decisive effect upon their future. By their traditions, their sympathies, and their whole political outlook the Czechs were on the side of western European democracy and against the central autocracies for whom they were called upon to fight. Owing to the presence of great numbers of German and Austro-Hungarian troops on Czech territory, however, open protest or revolution was obviously impossible, for either would have been suppressed with a ruthless hand. The opposition of the Czechs accordingly took the form of passive resistance, the desertion to the allies of considerable numbers of Czech troops when opportunity offered, and the formation of secret societies in preparation for the decisive moment. The brunt of the revolutionary movement was, however, borne by the political exiles, who, having escaped abroad at the beginning of the war, began to carry on in the allied and neutral countries an extensive propaganda aimed at achieving independence for the Czech and Slovak lands.

The case of the Slovaks was somewhat different from that of the Czechs. Though they have lived in the region bearing their name, which until 1918 com-

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prised the northern counties of Hungary, since the fifth century, they were not animated by the traditions which inspired the Czechs, for, save for two brief interludes, they have always been under foreign domination. From the seventh to the tenth century they were subject to the Avars and the Franks, forming part of Great Moravia until in 907 that kingdom was conquered by the Magyars, under whose rule the Slovaks remained for a thousand years. It might be supposed that after such a length of time the Slovaks would have become thoroughly Magyarized, but such was not the case. For the Slovaks, who are a stubborn folk, sullenly resented the attitude of their Magyar masters, who always treated them as an inferior race and did their utmost to suppress the Slovak nationality in every way, even to the extent of taking away Slovak children to be brought up as Magyars, and denying them the right to use their language in church or school. As a result of this policy of repression and persecution large numbers of Slovaks emigrated to the United States.

The most active of those who pleaded the cause of Czechoslovak independence in the allied countries during the war was a professor-politician named Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, the son of a Slovak coachman employed on one of the Austrian imperial estates; his mother was a Czech from Moravia. After obtaining a common school education he became first a locksmith's apprentice in

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Vienna, then a blacksmith at Cejc. At the age of fifteen, however, he decided to become a teacher and began studying at Brunn, supporting himself, as did many poor students, by tutoring. He continued his studies at a gymnasium in Vienna, from which he graduated with honors, and at the university, where in 1879 he became a lecturer in philosophy. He spent a year in Leipzig, where he met his future wife, Miss Charlotte Garrigue, daughter of the president of the Germania Insurance Company of New York. (Incidentally, his son, Jan Masaryk, now Czechoslovak minister in London, also married an American, the daughter of Charles R. Crane, formerly American minister to China.) Before he was thirty he had attracted the attention of the scientific world by publishing several remarkable works on philosophical and sociological questions.

Masaryk's political career started in the early eighties, when he became the editor of a political weekly called "Cas" ("Times"). In 1891 he was elected to the Austrian Parliament by the Young Czech party, but he soon resigned to devote himself to a crusade of moral education among his people. Although he made himself unpopular by his stand on nationalist questions—as when he defended a Jew named Hilsner in the so-called "ritual murder trial"—his ideas made a deep impression and he soon became the acknowledged leader of Czechs, Yugoslavs, and other Slavs. In 1907 he was reelected to Parliament and soon began to criticize Austria's



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passive subjection to Germany and her own aggressive policy in the Balkans, particularly as manifested by the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. By his fearless stand against injustice and oppression he incurred the intense displeasure of the official and court circles in Vienna, but he made a reputation for himself abroad which was to stand him in good stead later on.

When the war broke out he was still a member of the Austrian Parliament, but he escaped from Vienna toward the end of 1914, and in the four years which followed conducted a political and propagandist campaign in France, England, Italy, Russia, and the United States on behalf of Czechoslovak liberation from Habsburg rule. In the spring of 1918 he went to America. The result was the Lansing declaration of sympathy with the cause of Czechoslovak and Yugoslav independence, a declaration of policy to which the allied Governments gave their official adherence a year later. This action by the Washington Government was the first step toward the recognition by the allies of the National Council, which Masaryk had formed in 1915 at Geneva, as the *de facto* government of the future Czechoslovak state. While in America, on May 30, 1918, Masaryk negotiated the agreement of Pittsburgh, of which I shall have more to say later on. Returning to Europe, he was elected the first president of the Czechoslovak Republic on November 14, 1918. To this office he has twice been reëlected, and, though his political



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influence has somewhat diminished of late, it is generally assumed that he can, if he so desires, retain the presidency for life.

When the temperamental and cultural differences of the two peoples are taken into consideration, it is not surprising that, after the first flush of enthusiasm, friction should have arisen between the Czechs and the Slovaks. There is, in fact, a striking similarity between the political situation which has arisen in Czechoslovakia and that which exists in another composite Slav state, Yugoslavia, where the Croats and Slovenes are complaining bitterly of oppression by the Serb majority. The Czechs, an energetic, ambitious, progressive, and aggressive people, who outnumber the Slovaks three to one, look with condescension, if not contempt, on their less literate, slower-thinking, more easy-going partners, whom, if the truth be known, they regard as immensely inferior to themselves.

At Pittsburgh, addressing a convention composed of Slovaks residing in the United States, Masaryk solemnly promised that if they would unite with the Czechs and, when a peace conference was called, join with the latter in a demand for independence, he, as the president of the Czech National Council, would guarantee the Slovaks complete autonomy within the proposed state, with a constitution and a parliament of their own. This promise he reiterated in writing. There is little evidence, however, that the Slovaks who attended the Pittsburgh meeting were



AT THE MOUTH OF THE MOLDAU

"There's a schooner in the offing,  
With her topsails shot with fire,

And my heart has gone aboard her  
For the Islands of Desire."



## BE A BOHEMIAN!

other than self-appointed delegates, or that they were authorized to speak for their compatriots either in the United States or at home. Yet, at the Peace Conference in Paris, when the question of forming a Czechoslovak state came up for discussion, and it was proposed that a plebiscite should be taken, Masaryk produced this agreement as proof that the whole Slovak people were in favor of union. When, however, certain Slovaks demanded that the wishes of the Slovak nation be determined by plebiscite, Masaryk told them that the pledges contained in the Pittsburgh document were not binding, as it had been signed on a public holiday. Later in the same year, at Turciansky St. Martin, another equally astute politician, Hlinka by name, induced some of his Slovak supporters to issue a similar declaration, the idea being to convince the still hesitant allies that both American and European Slovaks were in favor of union with the Czechs; but in a statement issued by the Slovak nationalists in 1922 it was pointed out that neither the Pittsburgh nor the Turciansky St. Martin signatories possessed the slightest authority to speak for the people of Slovakia as a whole.

Though it is extremely difficult to learn the true facts of so involved a situation by a few weeks' stay in a country, particularly when one does not speak that country's language, I left Czechoslovakia with the impression that there is a real basis for the frequently repeated assertions that there is serious

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disaffection among the Slovaks and that the separatist movement among them is steadily gaining ground. Certain it is that they are profoundly discontented with things as they are at present, but whether a plebiscite would show, as certain observers have claimed, that the majority of Slovaks desire reunion with Hungary, is open to question.

Leaving aside the question of whether they were or were not jockeyed into a union with the Czechs, the chief complaint of the Slovaks, so far as I have been able to determine, is that the Czechs are subjecting them to both political oppression and systematic economic exploitation. Since the establishment of the republic, if the Slovaks are to be believed, upward of a million Czech officials, tradesmen, and laborers have settled in Slovakia, thereby making it that much more difficult for the less efficient Slovaks to earn a living. It is also pointed out that a number of Slovak industries, such as the explosives factory at Bratislava and the government mint at Kremnica, have been removed to Bohemia, thereby throwing large numbers of Slovaks out of work. To this the Government replies that the plants in question were too near the frontier and were moved into the interior of the country for purely strategic reasons.

I also heard complaints to the effect that the Czechs were the sole beneficiaries of the Land Reform Act, and that, as a result of the unfair manner in which it has been executed, thousands of



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Slovak laborers are without employment; that Czech industrial, commercial, and banking firms have been accorded privileges denied to Slovak business houses; and that concessions for exploiting the state domains have been granted mainly, if not exclusively, to Czechs. Just how much justification there is for these charges I have been unable to determine to my own satisfaction. I have reason to believe, however, that there is considerable ground for the complaint that Czechs are given systematic preference in the various forms of government employment, even in Slovakia itself. Though it is undeniable that the Czechs, as a whole, are better educated and far more efficient than the Slovaks, there are among the latter many men who could quite safely be intrusted with administrative duties, but they do not appear to be very numerous in the government bureaus. This policy, if it is a policy, is pursued, I suppose, in order to keep the administration in Czech hands.

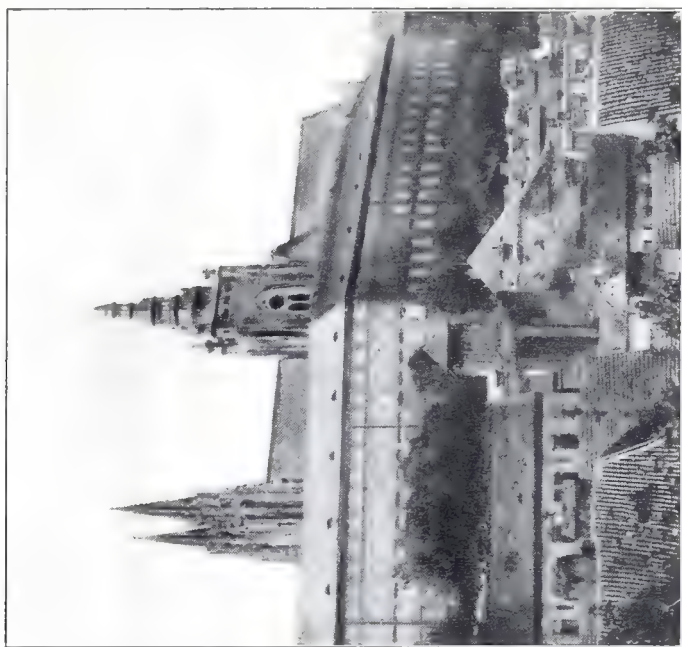
It is obviously undesirable for a country to have two languages—though the system seems to work smoothly enough in Belgium, where both French and Flemish are officially used—but it would appear that the Czechs have quite needlessly antagonized the Slovaks by attempting to coerce the latter into using the Czech language. Slovak children are being compelled to learn Czech, to which I can see no great objection; passports and other official documents are now almost invariably written in the official lan-

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guage, which seems reasonable; but I see no necessity for insisting that the sign-posts and street names in Slovak territory shall be in Czech, nor is there the shadow of an excuse for the prohibition of the Slovak national anthem. The Slovak press is under a rigid censorship, letters and printed matter entering Slovakia are liable to censorship and confiscation, and it is not wholly wise for a Slovak to insist on his right, as guaranteed by the constitution, to free speech.

Perhaps the most foolish thing the Czechs have done, however, is their persecution, for that is what it amounts to, of the Roman Catholic church in Slovakia, where various measures, including confiscation of its property, have been taken to diminish the church's power and influence. A considerable number of the leading Czechs are frankly irreligious and nearly all of them are violently opposed to anything which smacks of clericalism—in which respects their theories tend toward communism—whereas the vast majority of the Slovaks are devout churchmen, and it seems folly to meddle with their religion. In the words of Talleyrand, "It is worse than a crime; it is a mistake."

In discussing the differences between the Czechs and the Slovaks it is easy to be an alarmist, but, provided the Czechs adopt a more conciliatory attitude toward their partners, I see no real reason for alarm. The Slovaks undoubtedly have numerous grounds for their complaints, and, as they are a



High on a wooded hill above the Vltava, commanding a magnificent panorama of Prague, is the vast palace of the ancient kings of Bohemia, now the seat of the Czechoslovak Government and the official residence of President Masaryk. Behind the palace rise the twin spires of the Cathedral of St. Vitus, where the rulers of Bohemia were crowned.



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stubborn and determined people, the Czechs would do well to heed them. I do not believe that there is any large element among the Slovaks which seriously desires reunion with Hungary, and they assuredly must realize that a nation of only two millions of people could not go it alone. If the Czechs will put an end to the existing bitterness by freely conceding to the Slovaks those rights as equal partners which they were promised by the agreement of Pittsburgh and which are guaranteed them by the constitution, I see no reason why the Czechoslovak Republic should not continue as a going and prosperous concern.

The Czechs and Slovaks are so closely related—they represent two branches of the same Slav race—and, despite their numerous differences, have so much in common, that their union, far from being artificial, is a perfectly natural and logical one. Ruthenia, which joined the republic later on, is in a somewhat different category from the other divisions, for it enjoys a large measure of autonomy and is bound to Czechoslovakia proper by very loose ties. There are also upward of three million Austro-Germans in the country—they outnumber the Slovaks in the proportion of three to two—but they dwell for the most part in Bohemia, where they are so interspersed with the Czech population that it would have been humanly impossible to have delimited a frontier which would have separated the two races even approximately. Though the Germans



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of Bohemia remember with regret the old days when they were masters of the land, and though they indulge in chronic complaints about Czech oppression, they are amply able to look after their own interests, and, so far as I could observe, the two races are getting along together tolerably well. I imagine, indeed, that if the Germans were given their choice between remaining citizens of the vigorous young Czechoslovak Republic or of being restored to an Austria that is now weak and helpless, most of them would vote to continue as they are. They might think quite differently, however, were Austria to become a part of the German Reich, as in time it almost certainly will.

But the Magyars of Czechoslovakia, of whom there are probably not far from 800,000, are in an entirely different position, for they form a compact group along the southern borders of the new state, to which they were annexed against their will and to which they are attached by none of the motives of expediency or self-interest which animate the Bohemian Germans. The bulk of the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia are in the "black lands," an extremely rich agricultural region lying along the banks of the Danube where that river forms a natural frontier between Czechoslovakia and Hungary. The Czech argument is similar to that of Italy regarding the Brenner Pass, or England's with respect to Gibraltar—namely, that it is a military necessity; though in agreeing to it the peace delegates were

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compelled to jettison the principle of self-determination which they had so loudly proclaimed. It was generally understood at the time that the action of the treaty-makers in permitting Czechoslovakia to annex this compact mass of Hungarians was due to the insistence of Marshal Foch and the French general staff, who, with that lack of vision which so frequently characterizes professional military men, declared that the cause of European tranquillity would be better served by giving the Czechoslovaks a strong military frontier than by permitting a few hundred thousand peasants to remain Hungarian.

The injustice of the transaction was tacitly admitted by the allies at the signing of the treaty of Trianon in a 'covering letter written by the French premier, M. Millerand, which promised that the frontiers as laid down should, if necessary, be revised. Even more significant is the testimony of Mr. Lloyd George, war-time premier of Great Britain, who, writing in September, 1927, in regard to the treaties with the central powers, said: "I can state emphatically that their authors never claimed for them such a degree of perfection that they held them to be immutable. . . . We all distinctly contemplated the possibility of certain clauses and provisions of the treaties themselves being made the subject of discussion, adjudication and possible revision by the great tribunal set up in the first clause of these treaties—the League of Nations."

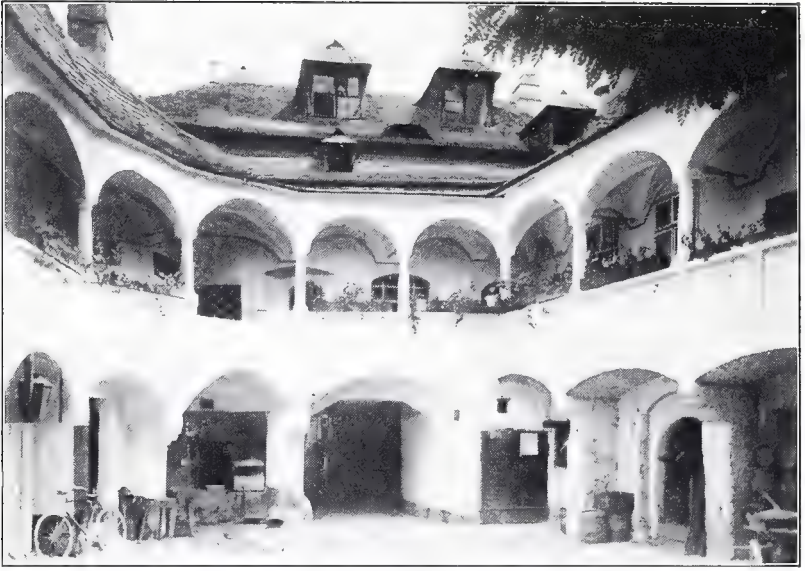
Though the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia have

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fared far better than their brethren under Rumanian rule, though they have escaped the brutalities practised on the Magyars of Transylvania, their condition is not a happy one. Racial passions and nationalistic ambitions have been roused to such a pitch, however, the air is so filled with charges and counter-charges, with accusations and denials, that it is almost impossible to determine the facts of the situation. The extremist point of view has been voiced by Lord Rothermere, the English newspaper publisher, who, in violently championing the Hungarian cause, states that the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia "have been subject to oppression by the side of which the Germanization of Alsace-Lorraine pales into insignificance." A much more temperate opinion is expressed by Mr. Donald Curry, the Vienna correspondent of the "Christian Science Monitor," one of the best-informed men in Europe on the Danubian question, who says: "As far as can be gathered, the Czechs probably committed some mistakes in their dealings with the Hungarian minority, but on the whole these Hungarians are not nearly as dissatisfied with their position as certain interests would have the world believe." The truth is probably to be found somewhere between these radically opposed points of view.

The constitution of Czechoslovakia expressly guarantees all citizens of the new state full equality before the law and equal civil and political rights, whatever be their race, origin, language, or religion,





The courtyard of an arcaded house at Krems. With its whitewashed walls, gay flowers, and numerous entrances, it might be the setting for an opera



The choir-house at St. Michael-Dürnstein, built in the 12th century. In this town Richard the Lion-Hearted, captured while returning from the Crusades, was imprisoned



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together with full personal freedom, inviolability of domestic rights and of the mails, freedom of the press, the right of free assembly and association, and of the expression of opinion by word, writing, or print, and prohibits every manner of forcible denationalization. Yet these constitutional guarantees, many of them at least, are honored more frequently in the breach than in the observance.

The principal and perhaps the most vital grievance put forward by the Magyar residents of Slovakia—there are few Magyars in Bohemia—concerns their rights to citizenship, which they are guaranteed by the treaty of Trianon, provided they can prove that they enjoyed a similar status under the Hungarian régime. In other words, those residents in the annexed territories who were Hungarian citizens at the time of the annexation are presumed to have the right, if they so elect, automatically to become citizens of the Czechoslovak state.

Under the Hungarian law any man who had lived in any parish for four years and had contributed to its taxes for the same period secured automatically the status of citizen, and therefore the right to vote. The Czechs have ruled, however, that all who had not acquired their citizenship prior to January 1, 1910, are required to take out fresh naturalization papers. Furthermore, the parish authorities—who are in nearly all cases Czechs or Slovaks—must give their official approval before the citizenship of any

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Hungarian becomes valid. As a consequence of this arbitrary ruling, there are tens of thousands of Hungarians in Slovakia and Ruthenia, including several members of Parliament, who possess no naturalization papers and have been able to obtain none. The unwisdom and unfairness of granting such veto power to parish councils, the majority of whose members are Slovaks, will be obvious when it is remembered that the Slovaks have a bitter hatred for the Magyars and eagerly seize upon this means of satisfying ancient grudges and paying off old scores.

But this is only one of the expedients employed by the Czechoslovak majority to reduce the number of Magyar votes, for Parliament has passed a law which provides that the Magyars shall be permitted full enjoyment of their minority rights only in those districts in which they constitute at least 20 per cent. of the inhabitants. This ingenuously evades the obligations imposed upon Czechoslovakia by the peace treaties by asserting that a minority is not a minority if it forms less than one fifth of the total local population. This has resulted, as it was obviously intended to do, in the disfranchisement of a considerable proportion of the Magyar electorate and the closing of a large number of Magyar schools, clubs, theaters, and cultural associations. Mr. Dudley Heathcote, who was sent to Czechoslovakia by the "Daily Mail" to investigate the situation, places the number of Magyars who have thus been deprived of their cultural privileges at 350,000, but the evi-

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dence of other observers suggests that this figure is considerably too high. He backs his assertion, however, by the statement that the number of Magyar primary schools in the annexed territory has fallen from 2223 to just over 700, the number of secondary schools from 95 to 20, and the technical colleges and gymnasia from 67 to 10. The most reliable statistics obtainable seem to bear out, though only in part, the contentions of the Magyars that they are not allowed to have the full quota of educational institutions to which they are entitled. According to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* the Magyars in Czechoslovakia comprise approximately 5½ per cent. of the total population. According to the *Statesman's Year Book* for 1927, 5.8 per cent. of the primary schools are Magyar—a fair proportion—but 0.5 per cent. of the secondary schools are Magyar, and less than 3 per cent. of the gymnasia and technical institutions.

Mr. Heathcote also points out that the Government has found another weapon for employment against the Magyars in an obscure clause of the constitution—"a joker" it would be called in America—which provides that even the fundamental right possessed by every Czechoslovak citizen, which entitles him to use any language he chooses, whether in private life, business intercourse, or in his religious devotions, can be taken away arbitrarily "for higher reasons of state."

As a minor example of the oppressive methods employed by the Czechoslovak Government, I might

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mention that Hungarians living in Slovakia are not permitted to receive Hungarian newspapers, which are confiscated by the postal authorities, this breach of the constitution being based on the plea that they might contain attacks on the Czechoslovak administration. President Masaryk and Foreign Minister Benès, with both of whom I discussed the matter, excused it by explaining that it was a measure taken by the police of Slovakia, which is jealous of its autonomous rights, and that consequently the Central Government could not interfere.

The Hungarians in Czechoslovakia will tell you that their letters are subject to censorship and sometimes to confiscation, and that it is safer to send them by registered post or, better still, by hand. This charge was substantiated to some extent by my own experience, for of three letters which I sent from Germany to a Hungarian friend in Slovakia, two were delayed for over a fortnight and the third was not delivered at all. All titles of nobility were abolished by the constitution, but it seems rather petty for the postal officials to refuse to deliver letters because they happen to be addressed to princes, dukes, or counts. An example of this pettiness occurred when we were staying in Prague. A certain Count X came to call upon my daughter, but the manager of the hotel refused to send up his name until he had changed the prefix to "Mister."

The Government at Prague is charged with the toleration, if not the actual instigation, of numerous



GERMANY



THE REPUBLIC OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA





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other acts of oppression, certain of which I have good reason to believe are true, while others are undoubtedly exaggerations. Certainly it is no exaggeration, however, to say that by no elasticity of language can Czechoslovakia be described as a free country in the sense in which the Anglo-Saxon peoples understand that term, for she not only employs wholly unjustifiable measures of repression toward the minorities, but forbids all discussion of the situation in her press, while her police seem to have copied the old czarist policy of espionage, censorship, and intimidation.

It was apparent from the outset that the German nobles of Bohemia and the Hungarian magnates of Slovakia, who between them almost controlled the land, were not likely to acquiesce quietly in Czechoslovak rule. In the interests of Czechoslovakia, therefore, their powers of resistance to the new order of things must be diminished, they must cease to be great landowners. Accordingly, with the double-barreled object of reducing them to the position of petty proprietors and of satisfying the demands of the land-hungry peasants, Czechoslovakia, like Rumania, early adopted a drastic policy of land expropriation.

Now there can be no denying that social and economic conditions in the new republic made some system of land reform a crying necessity. Prior to the war most of the land was in the hands of the large proprietors, while the great mass of the peas-

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ants had little, if anything, to afford them a living. More than one quarter of all Bohemia was owned by less than 2 per cent. of the landowners. Nearly one third of the soil of Moravia was owned by less than 2 per cent. of the landowners. Matters were even worse in Slovakia, where about a thousand persons owned nearly half of the entire country.

During a conversation with Dr. Eduard Benès, the exceedingly able statesman who is Czechoslovakia's minister of foreign affairs, I obtained a graphic idea of the miseries suffered by the peasants as a result of this pernicious system.

"My parents," said Dr. Benès, "were poor peasants, and I was one of a large family of children. We were desperately poor. We lived in a miserable hut in the village of Kozlany, my father supporting us by tilling a small piece of leased ground. And our neighbors were no better off than we were. Life would have been more endurable for us, however, if we could have bought the land we lived on, instead of having to pay out in rent nearly everything we earned. But, though the nobleman who was our landlord owned thousands of hectares, a large portion of the estate being preserved for shooting, he refused to sell a foot of soil to relieve the misery of the people at his gates."

It will be seen, therefore, that a very real need existed for the act passed in April, 1919, which authorized the state to take over for partition and distribution estates exceeding 150 hectares (about 370



“THE SPLENDOR FALLS ON CASTLE WALLS”

Castle Huboka, the imposing seat of one of the great Bohemian noblemen





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acres) of arable land, or 250 hectares of land of any other category. Though the ostensible aim of the law was to provide the great mass of the people with land, thereby insuring their support of the administration, there can be no doubt that its farmers were actuated by an ulterior motive—by the determination to weaken the power of the German and Hungarian proprietors by transferring the titles in large measure to Czechoslovaks. If, as a result of the expropriation of their lands, the Germans and Hungarians should be forced to leave the country, well and good—they were not wanted and had no business there anyway.

The Czech point of view was summed up by an official of the Foreign Office with whom I discussed the question while I was in Prague. "We are only taking back what is rightfully ours," he said. "Most of the land which we are expropriating originally belonged to the Czechs, and was taken from them by the Austrian invaders after the battle of the White Mountain." Historically, this argument is sound, but the battle of the White Mountain, as I have remarked earlier in this chapter, was fought three hundred years ago, which is quite a length of time to have held title to property, and in most countries would make the title valid. Repeated attempts have been made by the Indians to obtain the restoration of the lands which were taken from them by American settlers in the seventeenth century and later, but I can recall no case where the

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courts have decided in their favor. Nor can the historical argument be put forward to support the expropriation of lands which were acquired in very recent years and by perfectly legitimate purchase. I know of one large property which was purchased only a few years ago, since when its owner has spent large sums in developing it scientifically and putting it on a paying basis, yet under the law he receives no more consideration than those of his neighbors whose lands have passed down to them from marauding ancestors of the Middle Ages.

Even if the Land Reform Act had been carried out intelligently and with scrupulous honesty it would have worked great hardships on the proprietors, but the law as interpreted and enforced at present is neither just in its provisions nor is it being honestly executed.

In the first place, the compensation allowed the owners has been so insignificant as to amount to virtual confiscation. Most fair-minded Czechs admit this, but excuse it on the ground that, were the owners paid the full value, or anywhere near the full value, of their land it would cripple the country financially.

The law provides that indemnification for expropriated land shall be based on its average value between 1913 and 1915. On the face of it, that sounds very fair. But it must be remembered that farming land has increased in value enormously since the war. Proof of this is found in the fact that the

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Czechoslovak Government sells the land to the peasants for prices from 50 to 75 per cent. in excess of what it paid the owners for it, and though this difference is supposed to cover the costs of subdivision and sale on the easy-payment plan, the Government nevertheless makes a very tidy profit on each transaction. Moreover, the Government pays for the land in depreciated Czechoslovak crowns, which at present are worth only about one seventh of their par value. And, finally, the Government need not necessarily pay the owner in cash at all, even in this depreciated currency, but may give him state bonds bearing interest at from 3 to 4 per cent., which is greatly below the rate prevailing in Czechoslovakia, where 8 per cent. is frequently paid on commercial loans.

But let me make the situation clearer by a hypothetical example, as the lawyers say. An imaginary Hungarian—we will call him Michael Horthobagy—who was placed under Czechoslovak rule by the treaty of Trianon, has a property of 300 hectares devoted to the growing of sugar-beets. We will assume, for the sake of argument, that, being highly cultivated land, it would bring in the open market 150,000 gold crowns, or approximately \$30,000. But, under the law, Horthobagy is permitted to retain only 150 hectares, the Government expropriating the rest. The 150 hectares taken over by the state are actually worth 75,000 gold crowns—\$15,000. For purposes of expropriation, however, the property is as-

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sessed not on its present value but on its average value during the 1913-15 period, at say, 50,000 gold crowns, or about \$10,000. Though much less than the price which Horthobagy could probably obtain in the open market, this is not a sum to be despised. But—and here is the joker—instead of paying the 50,000 crowns in gold, the Government pays them in paper (the paper crown, as I have stated, being worth only about one seventh of the gold crown), so that the unfortunate Horthobagy receives for property presumably worth \$15,000 the equivalent of \$1426. The Government defends this injustice—first, by asserting that its financial condition does not permit of its paying a higher rate for expropriated land; second, by the reminder that the paper crown, though greatly depreciated, is still the legal currency of Czechoslovakia; and, third, by pointing out that if the late owner holds his paper crowns they may appreciate as the country's financial condition improves. But there is likewise the possibility that they may depreciate still more.

Needless to say, the Government recognizes the wisdom of paying for the land which it expropriates in cash, that is to say, in depreciated paper, but under the law it can, if it sees fit, pay Horthobagy in non-transferable state bonds bearing 4 per cent. interest, in which case he would receive the munificent sum of \$57.04 a year in exchange for property which yielded him, it is fair to assume, in the neighborhood of \$1000 per annum.







SCHÖNBRUNN, THE FORMER HOME OF THE HABSBURGS

The avenue formed by walls of meticulously clipped trees affords charming vistas of the great white palace in which so many of the Habsburgs, including L'Aiglon, lived and died

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Stripped of the high-sounding verbiage with which it has been camouflaged, that is what expropriation, as practised in Czechoslovakia, means. Is it to be wondered at that the landowners feel that they are being made the victims of a deliberate policy of spoliation which has few counterparts in modern times? It may be true, as frequently stated, that most of the proprietors are rich men, or at any rate well-to-do ones, and hence deserve no sympathy, but that is no reason for denying them a square deal.

President Masaryk, who, I have been told, looks on the land reform scheme as it is being applied with some misgivings, discussed the question with me very candidly.

"It would be idle to deny," he said, "that the expropriation measures have worked numerous hardships on individual proprietors. But what could we do? We were confronted by a great national necessity. The peasants demanded the land, which they unquestionably needed, and the Government pledged itself to give it to them. But Czechoslovakia is poor—it has need for five dollars where it spends one—and it simply cannot afford a higher rate of compensation than it is paying. Unfortunately, our currency is greatly depreciated, and those whose lands are taken suffer accordingly, but there is always the possibility that it may recover, perhaps return in time to par, in which case the proprietors would receive adequate compensation for their lands."

My own feeling is that the greatest reproach to

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the Czechoslovak Government lies not in its adoption of the principle of expropriation, for some such measure was doubtless inevitable, or even in the inadequacy of the compensation (the Governments of the Baltic states expropriated the lands of the great proprietors without making them any compensation whatever), but rather in the manner in which the law is being administered. The work of dividing the estates has been intrusted to petty local officials, many of whom are notoriously corrupt, some of whom have been proved guilty of favoring relatives, friends, and political supporters, while others have used their power to gratify personal grudges and ancient enmities. I heard of several instances where those intrusted with the execution of the law had been bought off by the proprietors, but, as one of the latter remarked, "One can't keep on buying these fellows off forever."

Though it is common knowledge that the Land Office is mismanaged, if nothing worse, though tales of fraud and bribery are repeated everywhere, no financial reports of the expropriations have ever been made public, in spite of repeated appeals to the Government to produce them. The opposition asserts that so many public men and politicians would be involved in the resultant disclosures that the Government does not dare to make them. Indeed, if only a fraction of the stories which were told me about these land deals is true, the Czechoslovak Government is guilty of tolerating frauds compared with

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which the Teapot Dome and Indian lands scandals are insignificant.

From what I have said in the foregoing pages it will be seen that running through the Czechoslovak body politic is a very distinct strain of socialism, which at times verges perilously on communism. In fact, there are twenty-one avowed Communists in the Czechoslovak Senate and forty-one in the Chamber of Deputies, to say nothing of the various brands of Socialists who, though not Reds, might certainly be classified as pinks. This is not at all surprising in a peasant country like Czechoslovakia, whose people have been embittered by centuries of foreign oppression, nor do I see in the fact anything which is particularly alarming, for Masaryk, Benès, and most of the other leaders are sane and able men, very far from being demagogues or extremists, and the Czechoslovaks themselves are at bottom a steady, level-headed race.

The young republic is enormously rich in forests, mines, agricultural resources, and industrial enterprises; its people are as progressive and energetic as any on the continent; the larger towns have the bustling, business-like atmosphere of American cities; and, despite the mistakes that it has made, I am convinced that the Government is making a sincere attempt to give the country a decent administration. Owing to the unsettled political state of the Continent generally, I look askance on all European loans, but, if one is willing to take a chance, I



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should say that of all the countries of eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia was the best risk.

The main element of risk—and I do not claim that it is a great one—lies in the selfishness displayed by the Czechs of Bohemia in their relations with the Slovaks and in the unconciliatory attitude they have displayed toward the Hungarians. The question of the relations between the Czechs and their Slovak partners is, however, a purely domestic one, and, given time, plus forbearance on both sides, it will, I imagine, eventually work itself out to their mutual satisfaction.

The problem presented by the Hungarian minority is a far more serious one. Even if a sincere attempt is made to conciliate these people, I do not believe that they can ever be assimilated successfully, for they are of a wholly different breed and have different traditions. Moreover, they are fully as patriotic as the Czechs themselves. Despite all efforts to denationalize them, they remain passionately devoted to the country from which they were torn.

This being so, they promise to remain a thorn in the side of Czechoslovakia, a source of trouble and of danger. Furthermore, now that the hatreds engendered by the war are dying down, public opinion everywhere is coming to recognize the fundamental injustice and unwisdom of imposing an alien yoke on any people, or fraction of a people, against their will, particularly when that people has





MARSHAL JOSEPH PILSUDSKI, THE DICTATOR OF POLAND

He is one of the most remarkable figures of our time. His career reads like that of a hero of romance. A revolutionary leader, a political exile in Siberia, the chieftain of a band of outlaws, an Austrian general, a prisoner in a German fortress, the savior of Poland during the Bolshevik invasion, this extraordinary man has lived more stories than Kipling or Doyle could invent



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some justification for claiming that it is being subjected to persecution and oppression.

By maintaining its rule over the former Hungarian areas along the north bank of the Danube, where the Magyar population forms an almost solid block, Czechoslovakia assures itself of a strong military frontier—though our ideas of what constitutes a defensible frontier must be radically revised in these days of long-range guns and three-hundred-miles-an-hour airplanes—and it also retains control of some useful railways and valuable coal mines. But are military frontiers and railways and coal mines actually worth what it costs in armies and anxieties to hold them? That is a question which merits the most serious consideration.

Yet on this subject the Czechs have thus far stubbornly refused to listen to reason, even when the arguments for a change in their attitude have been advanced by their friends. Their frontiers were fixed at the Trianon for all time, they assert, and in their refusal to consider any revision they are adamant. Their uncompromising attitude is doubtless attributable to the fact that just at present they are considerably “above themselves.” But such a frame of mind is hardly surprising in a people who obtained their independence so recently, so suddenly, almost without a blow, who have had good fortune literally thrust upon them.

Nothing is farther from my desire than to make an offensive comparison, but the intransigent atti-

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tude of the Bohemian Czechs calls to mind a young American whom I encountered some years ago in a Paris restaurant. He had recently come into a fortune, which, together with the fact that he was unaccustomed to champagne, led him to show a marked lack of consideration for the other diners.

"Quiet down, Bill," one of his companions adjured him. "You're making altogether too much noise. You can't run this place, you know. The people here won't stand for it."

"To hell with them!" the youngster retorted, beligerently. "I'm sitting on top of the world. I've got money and I've got a pull and I'm ready to fight any one who objects to my enjoying myself. So let's open another bottle. Come on, now! Be a bohemian!"



THE FORMER AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE AND THE PRESENT  
AUSTRIAN REPUBLIC

## CHAPTER VII

### “ANSCHLUSS”

I HAVE always maintained that, whenever it is possible, cities ought to be entered by motor instead of by train. Especially is this true when a visitor is approaching a city for the first time. Railways nearly always choose to enter cities through grimy manufacturing sections or squalid tenement districts or noisome tunnels, but the thoroughfares which one follows in entering them by motor are, with some exceptions, fine. Take the Grand Concourse in New York City for example, or the Champs Elysées in Paris, or the Potsdam-Berlin highway, or the splendid boulevard—I forget its name—which follows the Tiber into Rome. And Vienna is not one of the exceptions. The road which leads from the Hungarian frontier to the Austrian capital is atrocious, the result of war-time traffic, followed by neglect, but once you are within the city limits the streets are well paved and of imposing width, and after nightfall, when the lights have been turned on, very brilliant and gay. Perhaps I was unduly impressed by their brilliancy and gaiety, because the last time I had been in Vienna, immediately after the war, it was a city of the dead. The



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principal thoroughfares were only faintly illuminated, while the meaner streets were left in Stygian darkness; even the great hotels had heat for but a few hours each day; and over everything hung an atmosphere of gloom and despondency.

Now all that is changed. Vienna, the European capital over which the war cloud hovered longest, is recovering. True, it has not recovered its old-time pomp and splendor, and it never will, for the emperor is gone, and the court has gone, and the splendid uniforms which lent so much color to its streets are seen no more, the city which was the proud metropolis of the second largest empire in Europe having dwindled in social and political importance to a status commensurate with the seat of government of one of the smallest, and perhaps the poorest, of European states. But, despite its reverses, it has retained its individuality, its delicate and refined charm, the dignified serenity which distinguishes it from all other great cities. It is like an old aristocrat who, in spite of misfortune, is still sure of himself, who remains spruce and polished and debonair.

In the years which immediately followed the war Vienna was sunk in a slough of despondency; the specters of cold and hunger stalked its streets. The situation appeared all but hopeless. The Viennese are by nature a volatile, light-hearted folk, however, and with the improvement in their material condition they have recovered in large measure their former gaiety and love of pleasure. The restaurants are

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filled, the innumerable coffee-houses and music-halls are crowded, and when a popular bill is being given it is almost impossible to obtain seats at the theaters or the Opera. Electric signs flash above the Kärntnerstrasse, which is Vienna's Rue de la Paix; an up-to-date system of traffic control has been introduced with green and red lamps at the principal street intersections and on the pavements white markings for the guidance of pedestrians; policemen who speak foreign languages, distinguished by brassards, are stationed on the more frequented corners; the hanging gardens half-way up the tall lamp-posts have returned; along the Ring automobile manufacturers are opening luxurious show-rooms in which they display such high-priced cars as Rolls-Royces and Hispano-Suizas; there are orchids in the florists' shops and Scotch whisky in the wine-sellers' windows; Chaliapin and Jeritza sing to packed houses at ten dollars a seat; the people are better dressed; the greater care which is being bestowed on the parks and gardens, the whitewashing of the old gray houses, the erection of huge blocks of apartments—all these have given to the ancient capital of the Habsburgs an air of energy and freshness; they bespeak a determination to keep up with the times. From this it should not be assumed that the Viennese are idling in luxury—than that nothing could be farther from the truth—but, if still far from prosperous, they are at least returning to those normal standards of life to which they

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are entitled. Yet something is still lacking; those who knew Vienna before the war realize that the atmosphere of the city has undergone some subtle, indefinable yet none the less noticeable change.

Perhaps the change is most apparent in those former centers of aristocratic life, the Hofburg, Schönbrunn, and the Prater. No longer does the Bosnian bodyguard, with clashing cymbals and flaunting colors, come tramping through the lofty gateway of the Hofburg; in the great courtyard where gilded carriages with scarlet-liveried servants and satin-coated horses once awaited the orders of the court now stands a rank of mud-bespattered taxicabs. It is hard to realize that the shabby-looking men who flit through the palace's interminable corridors are the successors of the statesmen who shaped the policies of the empire. No more are the bridle-paths of the Prater crowded with superbly mounted officers in gold-laced képis and white wasp-waisted jackets; to-day about the only equestrians one sees in the famous park are a few rich Jews, war profiteers for the most part, riding to reduce their weight. But the greatest change of all is observable at Schönbrunn, the suburban palace, set amid a glorious old park, which was the favorite residence of the Habsburg monarchs to the last. Through the stately apartments where Francis Joseph slept and ate and worked and died now tramp hordes of tourists—gaping mountaineers from Tyrol, ruddy-cheeked, crop-haired Germans, English in tweeds,

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Americans with guide-books in their hands and cameras slung over their shoulders—surreptitiously fingering the rich brocades, exclaiming over the ceramics and carvings, commenting jocosely on the painted emperors and princes who from their gilded frames stare down upon these intruders disapprovingly.

I liked one story that was told me about Schönbrunn. After the collapse of Austria, when the Emperor Charles had abdicated and the court had fled, the officials of the new Socialist government who came out to take possession of the historic palace and to make an inventory of its furnishings were astonished to find a grizzled sentry of the Archer Guard pacing with measured tread the corridors of the deserted building. Didn't he know, they asked him, that the monarchy had fallen, that the emperor was in exile, that Austria had become a republic, that the old order had come to an end? Yes, he had heard all that, he answered, but he had been placed on duty by his superior officer; a soldier does not leave his post until he is relieved—and no one had come to relieve him. If Austria had had more loyalty of that sort it might be a great power still.

There remains in post-war Vienna one picturesque and interesting survival of the imperial régime, but it is so little known, save by the Viennese themselves, that one might stay in the city for months without ever hearing of it. It is the curious institution known as the Spanish Riding School, and if you



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happen to be in the Austrian capital when it is open you should on no account fail to witness one of its remarkable exhibitions, which are usually held every Sunday morning during the spring season. The school was founded in the days of the Holy Roman Empire, when the relations between Austria and Spain were very close, for the purpose of encouraging horsemanship among the members of the court and of training in the *haute école* the horses used by the ruler and his entourage. The exhibitions, though now open to the public, are given with much of the *éclat* which characterized them in imperial times. The school is still under the direction of the officer who was master of the horse to Francis Joseph—he sat in the car opposite the Archduke Francis Ferdinand when that unfortunate Habsburg and his wife were assassinated in the streets of Serajevo—and I was told that, though a poor man, he keeps the school in operation for sentimental reasons, without any assistance from the republican Government, the admission fees barely sufficing to cover the upkeep of the horses and the pay of the grooms.

The exhibitions are held in the great riding hall hard by the Hofburg—an enormous arena, floored with tanbark, surrounded by imposing colonnades, and with the imperial box at one end. The horses are pure Arabs, mainly whites or grays, with small heads, beautifully arched necks, the slimmest legs imaginable, and tails like flaunting banners. In the cocked hats, wine-colored tail-coats, white leather







#### WARSAW, A CITY OF CONTRASTS

The Stare Miasto, the quarter of the Jews, is a district of mean streets and narrow, steep-roofed houses. More than one third of the city's inhabitants are Jews

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breeches, and jack-boots which comprise the school's historic uniform the riders look like figures in old prints. The tricks, feats, and postures of the *haute école* require great dexterity on the part of both horse and rider, but they are fatiguing to both and are really useless except for show. Aside from their extraordinary gracefulness, the prancings, curvettings, and cavortings are interesting, however, because they prove that the *naïve* and apparently impossible postures in which sculptors and painters of an earlier day were fond of portraying horses and their riders—the paintings of the Spanish kings by Velasquez and the equestrian statue of Andrew Jackson opposite the White House in Washington are cases in point—are not really impossible at all.

Another reminder of pre-war Vienna is Sacher's restaurant in the Ring. It not only has the best cuisine in the city but it is still the favorite rendezvous of the aristocracy—the old aristocracy, I mean. Frau Sacher herself is usually in evidence near the entrance: a plump middle-aged woman in a tight black gown, habitually puffing a long black cigar. If you are a stranger she will probably usher you into the room at the right, which is no different from any other first-class restaurant, but if you are sufficiently insistent, and she has a table vacant, she may permit you to enter the smaller room at the left, which, in pre-war days, was Vienna society's holy of holies. In former times this room was reserved for members of the nobility, and almost every one in it was an

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archduke or a prince or a count or at the very least a baron. Most of the former habitués can no longer afford the luxury of dining at Sacher's—one of the archdukes who used to frequent the place, a cousin of the emperor's, is now a messenger in the employ of a motion-picture distributor, carrying films on a bicycle from one cinema house to another—but a few of the old customers may still be seen discussing over cobwebbed bottles of Imperial Tokay the great days that are gone forever.

Though the pomp and glitter of the court, which made the social life of Vienna one of the most brilliant in Europe, have departed, those lasting values which the discriminating traveler seeks remain. The museums, art galleries, libraries, and scientific collections are undisturbed, for the allies wisely refused the demands made by the succession states that, as legatees of the old empire, certain of the more valuable works of art in the Habsburg collections should be turned over to them. In fact, there is more for the visitor to see in Vienna since the war than there was before, as certain palaces and collections, once closed to the general public, have now been opened for the benefit of all, and for this liberalizing influence credit must be given to the Socialist administration.

No visitor who is in any way interested in Austrian history should leave Vienna without making a little pilgrimage to the Capuchin church—it is only a few steps from the Opera—beneath which are

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the burial vaults of the house of Habsburg. Escorted by a brown-robed monk, who holds aloft a guttering candle, the visitor picks his way down a flight of dark and narrow stairs to the crypt, a series of gloomy, chilly chambers which are literally crowded with massive bronze caskets. In these sarcophagi sleep all, or nearly all, of the princes of the house of Habsburg-Lorraine who ruled the Holy Roman Empire and the Dual Monarchy which succeeded it, together with their immediate relatives. There are, indeed, but two notable exceptions: the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the victim of assassins' bullets at Serajevo, is buried in an abbey in Upper Austria; Charles, the last of the Habsburg emperors, rests beneath the soil of the island in mid-Atlantic where he died in exile.

It is a place of tragedy, this imperial burial-vault, not because it is peopled by the dead but because the lives of so many of the great ones who sleep here were tragedies in themselves. In one room, redolent with the perfume of faded flowers, are but three caskets. In the center, set somewhat higher than the other two, is that of the Emperor Francis Joseph, who, after a reign of nearly seventy years, during which his wife was murdered, his brother executed, his only son committed suicide, and his nephew, the heir to the throne, was assassinated, himself died, weary, disillusioned, and broken-hearted, less than two years before his empire went down to defeat, humiliation, and dismemberment. On the right hand



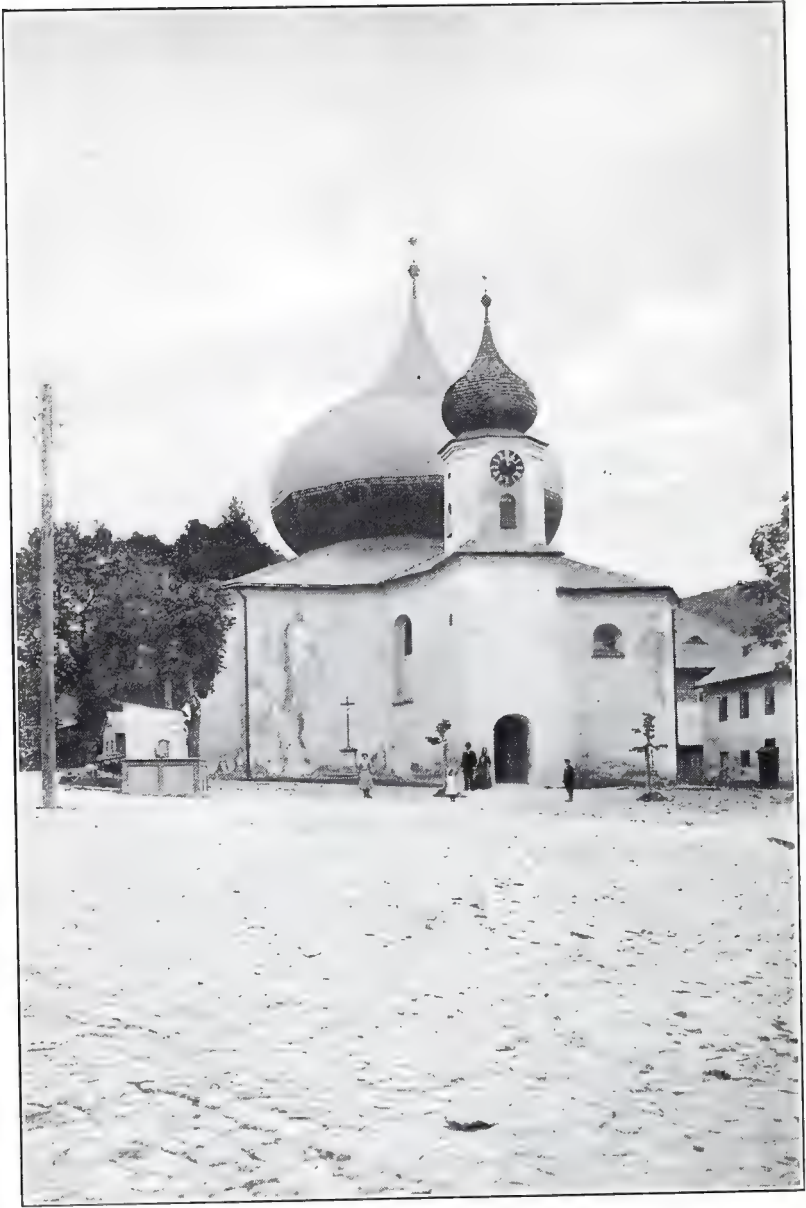
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of the emperor stands the casket of his wife, the beautiful and unhappy Elizabeth, who died on the quayside at Geneva by the knife of an assassin; on his left sleeps their only son, the Archduke Rudolph, who came to a mysterious end in the imperial hunting lodge of Meyerling as the result of an unfortunate love affair. (If he committed suicide, as most historians agree, one wonders why he was buried here, within the precincts of a Roman Catholic church.)

In another chamber, beside the dais on which rests the crown-surmounted sarcophagus of the first Francis, is an unobtrusive casket, narrow and severely plain. Yet it is the one which every visitor to the crypt most eagerly desires to see, for it contains all that is mortal of that youthful and unhappy prince, the son of Napoleon and Marie Louise, who bore the title of King of Rome, was addressed at the Austrian court as Duc de Reichstadt, and is known to millions as L'Aiglon. It has been suggested more than once that the remains of L'Aiglon be transferred from their present gloomy resting-place to Paris and laid beside those of his father beneath the great dome of Les Invalides. Though it is a suggestion which probably cannot be realized, it is none the less a fitting one, for the young prince was always wretchedly unhappy in Vienna and his heart was, where his body should be, with Napoleon.

A better conception will be had of the diminution in Vienna's political importance when it is remem-





A CHURCH IN ZELEZNA RUDA, MORAVIA

Its bulbous, shingled dome, suggesting at once a Russian cathedral and a Moslem mosque, looks for all the world like an enormous onion set on top of a soap-box

## “ANSCHLUSS”

bered that until 1918 it was the capital of an empire of 240,000 square miles whose fifty million inhabitants formed one eighth of the total population of Europe, whereas to-day it is the seat of government of a state having an area of only 32,000 square miles with six and a half million inhabitants. The territory included in the republic consists, moreover, of some of the poorest and most mountainous districts of the former empire. Only about one third of its area is under cultivation; another third is covered with forest, and the remainder is largely mountainous, though well suited in parts to grazing and dairy-farming. The economic situation of the country is completely dominated by Vienna, a highly organized financial, commercial, and industrial center containing nearly one third of the population of the republic in a comparatively poor state, unable to produce, under present conditions, sufficient foodstuffs to meet the needs of its people, and cut off by political barriers from its former markets and sources of supply.

The republic of Austria, which was born on November 12, 1918, the day following the abdication of the emperor, comprises nine provinces: the city of Vienna, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Styria, Carinthia, Tyrol, Vorarlberg, and the Burgenland. There is in every province a Landtag, or provincial assembly, each consisting of one chamber. Under this arrangement the city of Vienna, with a territory of only 107 square miles, was severed from

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Lower Austria, of which it was formerly a part, and assumed the status of an independent province within the framework of the federal state. Its burgo-master is likewise a provincial governor, and it enjoys all the legislative and administrative powers given to the provinces by the constitution, its financial policy being, therefore, its own and inviolable. These rights it has jealously guarded against all encroachments. It is, in effect, a state within a state.

Now the Government of Austria is Christian Socialist, this party, which for the sake of brevity I shall hereafter refer to as the Clericals, representing the conservative elements in the community—that is, the sturdy deeply religious peasantry and an overwhelming majority of the upper and middle classes in Vienna and the principal towns. The government of Vienna, on the contrary, is in the hands of the Social Democrats—hereafter I shall call them Socialists—who represent the industrial workers. This latter party, on the whole, is strongly opposed to anything which savors of bolshevism, though the members of its extreme left wing look with considerable favor on the principles enunciated by Lenin.

Vienna is the only large city in the world which has a socialistic government, and, at least from their own point of view, the Socialists have made a tremendous success of its administration. In any event, it provides a conspicuous example of what socialism can do when given a free hand and hence is an experiment from which many useful lessons can be



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learned. Certainly there can be no denying that the city is exceedingly well run. The efficiency and courtesy of the police, the cleanliness of the streets, the efficient control of traffic, the excellence of the lighting and water systems, the profusion of flowers and shade trees along the main thoroughfares, and the well-kept appearance of the numerous parks, the unusual quiet for so large a metropolis, for the city has a population of nearly two million—to all these, visitors who have been there in recent years can give abundant testimony.

Yet, as might be expected, there are numerous complaints, some of them amply justified. Taxation under the Socialist régime has been oppressive. It has hit, and hit hard, theaters, hotels, restaurants, owners of motor-cars, and property-owners. It has been aimed, in accordance with Socialist policy, at those who possess wealth, who seek pleasure, or who demand luxuries. It may be argued that this is just, but the argument is not as good as it sounds, for it has been proved over and over again that when taxation becomes so excessive as to stifle normal industry it invariably checks production, thereby increasing unemployment and raising the cost of living, the very evils which socialism is combating.

No sooner had the Socialists gained control of the Vienna government than they enacted legislation by which rents have been kept down to a ridiculously low level. Mr. Curry, the correspondent of the “Christian Science Monitor,” is authority for the

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statement that the average rent for a fairly large apartment in the Austrian capital is one dollar a month. This applies more particularly to the apartments of the working classes, however, and I trust that on the strength of it my readers will not rush off to Vienna with the idea that they can live there for next to nothing, for living there, at least for foreigners, is by no means cheap.

Owing to the large proportion of the people of Austria who live in Vienna, the municipality is wealthy, a fact which has encouraged it to spend rather larger sums than it can really afford on city improvements, social welfare, education, and public health. Housing conditions, which were notoriously bad before the war, have been greatly improved by the construction at the municipality's expense of 30,000 apartments in huge six-story blocks of houses; a number of garden suburbs have been created with the help of the coöperative land settlement movement, by which houses are built coöperatively; several fine public parks have been made from gardens formerly in imperial possession; parts of the Hofburg, the huge imperial palace, have been converted into offices and shops (shades of the Habsburgs!); certain of the larger state apartments can now be hired for meetings; and portions of the Prater have been cut up into workmen's gardens, where those who are so minded can grow vegetables or flowers. Of course all these things help to increase the popularity of the Socialist government with the

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masses, but they also increase the rates, financial experts being unanimously of the opinion that one of the most pressing needs of Vienna, and of Austria for that matter, is immediate relief from exorbitant taxation.

With the capital in their hands, it was a foregone conclusion that the Socialists would attempt to gain control of the whole country and establish a Socialist state in the heart of Europe—a possibility which is not viewed with enthusiasm by the neighboring nations. But in their attempts to realize this ambitious plan the Socialists have met with stiff opposition, for the Clericals, under the leadership of Dr. Ignatz Seipel, who is a Roman Catholic priest as well as an exceedingly astute statesman, hold a comfortable parliamentary majority, and this majority tends to increase rather than diminish. In fact, the Socialists realize that the limit of their adherents, as drawn from the industrial workers, has about been reached, and that if they are to increase their political power they must devise some method of attracting to their ranks the small shopkeeper and the rural laborer. The general opinion is, however—and it was borne out by the elections of 1927—that the Socialists are unlikely to make any conspicuous gains. It is estimated that they would require at least 300,000 more votes than they can command at present in order to secure a majority in Parliament and oust the Clerical government, and nowhere near that number of fresh adherents are in sight.

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The religious sentiments of the Austrians are an important factor in the political situation. The country-side, being strongly Roman Catholic, naturally gives its support to the Clerical (Christian Socialist) party, whereas the Socialists (Social Democrats) demand the separation of church and state, the recognition of civil marriages and divorces, no financial support from the state for any religion, and no religion to concern itself in politics.

Furthermore, the Socialists would transform the present army—which has an authorized strength under the peace treaty of 30,000, though it is recruited to barely half that figure—into a sort of labor militia, something after the order of that established in Italy by the Fascists; they would follow the example of the Baltic states by giving the communes the right to take over the properties of the large proprietors for the benefit of the public at large, without indemnifying the owners; and they further assert—a curious tenet to be held by Socialists—that the union of Austria with Germany is inevitable. This last is due to their belief that only by such a union can the Habsburgs be prevented from returning to power. They would also increase and democratize educational facilities, do away with most of the protective tariffs, readjust taxes so as to lessen the burden on the middle classes, make the import and export of grain a state monopoly, and increase pensions and unemployment doles. On the



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other hand, the Socialists will have nothing to do with either bolshevism or fascism.

Many persons, unfamiliar with the involved political situation, interpreted the troubles which occurred in Vienna during the early summer of 1927, when one of the public buildings was burned and several policemen were killed, as convincing evidence that the population of the city was going Bolshevik. Any such assumption is very far from the truth. The outbreak of disorder was due to the dissatisfaction of a comparatively small number of Communists, abetted by the unruly element which is to be found in every great city, with the stern policy pursued by the Socialist municipal authorities in repressing the activities of the Reds. That the Socialist government of Vienna has no sympathy with bolshevism, and that it intends to maintain law and order in that city at all costs was amply proved by the promptness and energy which it displayed in putting down the disorders.

The third party in the Austrian Parliament consists of the Nationalists, or Pan-Germans, who represent the old nobility, the landed classes, a portion of the bourgeoisie, and many of those who held office under the imperial régime. They do not count for much politically, however, though they have more or less in common with the Socialists on account of their mutual desire for union with Germany and because both are in favor of the separation of church and state and school. The Nationalists clash with the



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Socialists, however, on the main point of capital versus labor, and on the hardly less important one of coöperation with the Jews, for the Nationalists will not tolerate Jews in their party, whereas Semitic influence is very strong in the councils of the Socialists. There has recently arisen a new political faction, known as the Middle Class People's party, which, as its name implies, represents the interests of the "white collar" classes, but it is little more than a moderate left wing of the Clerical party. Its platform is based on a demand that politics be kept out of business and out of education. On the other hand, it is strongly opposed to socialism, being particularly insistent that the middle class should be protected against the Socialist government of Vienna.

The complete dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the whittling down of Austria itself into a small mountainous tract, considerably smaller than the State of Indiana, created enormous financial and economic problems. Inflation and speculation followed as a matter of course. The crown followed the mark and the ruble down the toboggan-slide. When I was in Vienna at the height of the financial crisis I drew the equivalent of one hundred dollars on my letter of credit. The bales of depreciated paper currency which the teller shoved at me were so numerous that I was unable to get them all in my pockets but had to carry some of them back to my hotel wrapped up in a newspaper. The situa-

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tion became so alarming that the League of Nations was compelled to take a hand; the finances of the country were placed under the supervision of a high commissioner, Dr. Zimmerman, the burgomaster of Rotterdam; and a loan of \$160,000,000, guaranteed by the great powers, was granted to Austria. The financial reconstruction of the country has proceeded satisfactorily, so that to-day we have the currency stabilized (in 1925 the gold schilling was substituted for the depreciated crown), speculation has been curbed, and the commissioner of the League of Nations has been withdrawn. Though the industries are going through a difficult period of readjustment, and though there are still heavy deficits in the budget and the trade balance, the situation is far better than it was generally expected to be at this time.

Deprived of all her coal mines, of many of her industries, and of most of her larger cities, Austria has had to scan the economic horizon in quest of new sources of income. She believes that she has found what promises to be a profitable one, however, for, taking a leaf from the book of her next-door neighbor on the west, she has set about making herself “a second Switzerland.” In adopting this policy of exploitation Austria has displayed great wisdom, for few countries in Europe can offer more attractions to the tourists. Her castles may not equal in magnificence those of the French château country, but in their own individual way they are fully as picturesque and interesting. The mountain scenery of

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Tyrol is as fine in its way as any in Switzerland, the Ortler, 12,800 feet in height, being the loftiest peak in the eastern Alps. Styria Carinthia, and Tyrol are among the few districts in Europe where the quaint peasant costumes depicted on postcards are still commonly worn. With its straggling red-roofed villages, its fantastic church spires, its wayside shrines, its unexpected lakes and sylvan valleys, Austria is to the motorist a land of constant delight. There is excellent shooting in the forests and good fishing in many of the streams. Innsbruck is a famous mountaineering center; Ischl is one of the most fashionable spas in Europe; Salzburg is one of the most beautiful cities. In works of art the galleries and museums of Vienna are enormously rich; its Opera is world-renowned. Moreover, travel in the Austrian provinces is extremely cheap; the hotels and inns are quite generally good and steadily growing better; and I know of no people in Europe who are more eager to be of service to a stranger than the Austrians.

In pursuance of the Government's policy of drawing tourists to Austria in great numbers numerous inducements have been made. *Rundereise* tickets, which permit the holder to travel anywhere he pleases in Austria for a fortnight, are sold by the railways for twenty-eight dollars. The old railway carriages are being renovated, others built, and new express services inaugurated. By the establishment of more than a hundred new motor-bus routes some

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of the beautiful but remote valleys, hitherto little known to travelers, have been made easily accessible. In Tyrol has been opened a school for the training of hotel-keepers, where instruction is given in modern hotel management and in the comforts and cooking demanded by foreigners. The system of adding to hotel and restaurant bills a percentage to cover service has been generally adopted and is faithfully observed, thus doing way with the tipping nuisance. Heretofore Austria has been to American and English tourists a comparatively unexplored land, and it will take time to acquaint them with its attractions, but once these are fully realized it should become a serious rival of Switzerland as one of Europe's playgrounds.

The president of the Austrian Republic is Dr. Michael Hainisch. He was born in Lower Austria in 1858; his father was a manufacturer, his mother a pioneer of women's rights. He is a recognized authority on social, economic, and agricultural questions; was the founder of an association modeled on the lines of the British Fabian Society; has been extremely active in the cause of popular education; and has founded and endowed hundreds of popular libraries. He is a tall, rugged, gray-bearded, somewhat carelessly dressed man who looks like a well-to-do gentleman farmer, which is what he is among other things, for he owns and personally supervises a model farm of fifteen hundred acres, his herd of dairy cattle being one of the best in central Europe.



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He received me in his office in the Hofburg, the room having been formerly, I imagine, the place of business of the emperor, for the portraits of Habsburg monarchs and princes, their tight white uniforms ablaze with orders, looked down at us from the walls. A rather incongruous setting, it struck me, for the president of a republic which is strongly Socialist.

When President Hainisch learned that I had myself been interested in breeding blooded cattle his reserve vanished, and he plunged into an enthusiastic description of his herd, reeling off the pedigrees and records of the animals. I finally succeeded, however, in turning the conversation into political channels, and eventually to the question of "*Anschluss*," or union of Austria with Germany, which, ever since the war, has been the most discussed topic in Austria.

"The country that has been left us by the peace treaty," said President Hainisch, "is a hard one to develop, and no attempt was made to do so before the war. It did not make so much difference then, for within the empire we had ample supplies of cereals, cattle, and coal. Now, in order to reach Austria, those necessities must surmount formidable tariff barriers. The solution of our coal problem is to be found in the development on a large scale of our water-power, of which we fortunately have an ample supply, and in the electrification of our railways and industries. This we have already begun, but we are seriously hampered by lack of money. A no less important task



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is to build up our agriculture so as to make Austria self-supporting as soon as possible. I believe, however, that with the development of its water-power and an intensified agricultural production Austria will eventually be able to take care of itself economically.

“But the fact should never be lost sight of,” he continued slowly, measuring his words, “that we Austrians are a German people, and that our thoughts and hopes and hearts are with the German nation. Ninety-five per cent. of our people desire union with Germany. In this they are largely actuated, of course, by sentimental reasons, but they are also convinced, rightly or wrongly, that in *Anschluss* is to be found the only satisfactory solution of our economic problem.”

There are in Austria numerous and far-seeing men who believe, with President Hainisch, that with energy and perseverance the young republic might eventually become self-sustaining and make for itself a modest place in the world. Foreign economic experts are likewise of the opinion that at bottom Austria is sound and that, with a capable government and hard work, it should be able to get along after a fashion. But the great mass of the people persists in clinging to the view that the country is in a hopeless situation, and that its only hope of salvation lies in union with Germany. This state of mind is peculiarly unfortunate in that it has the effect of discouraging all initiative, of slowing up endeavor,

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at a time when initiative and endeavor are most needed; it has enormously handicapped the progress, slow as it is, which the country is making.

The war, the collapse of the monarchy, and the long series of tribulations and humiliations which followed completely broke the spirit of the Austrians. Instead of confronting their misfortunes courageously, defiantly, as the Hungarians have done, they take them lying down. In their defense it is only fair to point out, however, that an Austrian does not think of Austria as a Hungarian thinks of Hungary. The Hungarian has a deep national consciousness; the Austrian has little or none. This is explainable by the fact that by blood, language, and traditions the Austrians are Germans. Moreover, they were once Germans politically and they wish to become Germans politically again. Surely it is not surprising, or in any way open to criticism, that, rather than remain a small impoverished country, faced by the prospect of struggling along for years to come with the aid of foreign loans, a virtual ward of the League of Nations, treated by the succession states with contempt and condescension, Austria should wish to become a part of the powerful German nation, to which it is already attached by racial ties.

Now let it be clearly understood that *Anschluss* is in no sense forbidden by the peace pacts. Article 80 of the treaty of Versailles and Article 88 of the treaty of St. Germain merely stipulate that the union of Austria and Germany shall not be effected until

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the consent of the Council of the League of Nations has been obtained.

Whether such consent can be obtained in the near future—by which I mean within the next decade—seems to me exceedingly doubtful. It may be assumed that Czechoslovakia would oppose *Anschluss*, because she sleeps better o’ nights with a weak and helpless neighbor on her western frontier than she would with a powerful and aggressive one, and because she fears the disquieting effect which such a union would have on her own large German population. France would oppose it because she is Czechoslovakia’s ally—perhaps big brother would be a more accurate term—and because, on general principles, she does not wish to see Germany strengthened. It is quite possible that the most determined opposition of all might come from Italy, for Italy took from Austria, as spoils of war, South Tyrol, with 280,000 inhabitants of German blood, and she has no wish to see the Reich, which in a few years more will be quite capable of redressing the wrongs of oppressed Germans, push its frontiers down to the Brenner.

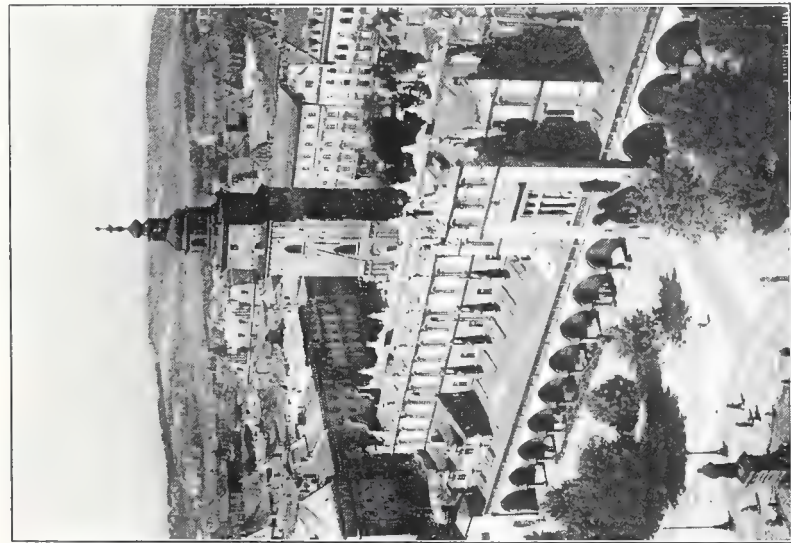
Austria’s relations with Czechoslovakia appear to be on a firmer foundation as the result of the pact concluded in 1921, in which both states pledged themselves to carry out the treaty of St. Germain loyally, to support each other against all revolutionary movements, and to submit all disputes to a court of arbitration. On the strength of this understanding

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

Czechoslovakia granted Austria a credit of 500,000,000 Czech crowns, and promised to support her applications for further credits in London and Paris. This rapprochement with the Czechs encountered strong opposition from the Austrian Nationalists, however, and led to the fall of the government which negotiated it. Somewhat less cordial are Austria's relations with Italy and Hungary, due to the action of Italy in 1921, when, as self-constituted arbitrator, she forced Austria to agree to a plebiscite in the Burgenland (a Hungarian district awarded to Austria by the treaty of Trianon), as the result of which the capital, Sopron, and several communes were restored to Hungary.

Neither the great powers nor the Little Entente view with enthusiasm the prospect of having to bolster up Austria financially for years to come; they have financial troubles enough of their own without having to continue lending her money or guaranteeing her loans. Yet, as they are perfectly aware, if they were to withdraw their financial support the Socialists would almost certainly come into power, and it is not a great stride from socialism to communism, particularly for a country that is poverty-stricken and discouraged. Italy and Czechoslovakia in particular recoil from the idea of permitting anything which would strengthen Germany, yet it is to be presumed that they would recoil even more from the prospect of having at their very doors a state which was distinctly pink and might easily become





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#### CRAKOW

No other Polish town possesses so many old and historic buildings, or has been so closely connected with the development of Poland. The Cloth Hall was erected in 1257; the Gothic tower behind it is all that remains of the ancient Rathaus



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#### VILNA

The Ostra Brama Chapel contains a deeply venerated statue of the Virgin which is believed by the devout to possess miraculous powers and draws hordes of pilgrims from all parts of Poland





## “ANSCHLUSS”

red. It is common knowledge, indeed, that the Communist disorders which occurred in Vienna in the summer of 1927, when for some days the situation appeared very critical, caused grave apprehension in Prague and Rome. There is also the possibility, if a very remote one, that were a Habsburg to regain the throne of Hungary an attempt might be made to reëstablish the Dual Monarchy, a contingency which would offer a far greater threat to the peace of central Europe than an Austro-German union. Curiously enough, the Austrian Socialists, who, it might be assumed, would prefer to have Austria retain its independence, are overwhelmingly in favor of *Anschluss*, because they believe that it is the only way of preventing a Habsburg restoration.

It is highly significant of the changing point of view in European political circles that not long ago Dr. Eduard Benès, the foreign minister of Czechoslovakia, publicly intimated that *Anschluss* was not entirely out of the question “in twenty or thirty years.” This may be that astute statesman’s way of hinting that the Franco-Czech contention that Austria is quite capable of being self-supporting is breaking down; or it may mean that he is gradually coming round to the opinion that the cause of peace in central Europe would be better served by a prosperous and contented Austria within the framework of the German Reich than by a demoralized and embittered Austria which was restrained from such union by force.

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

It is no secret that organizations having *Anschluss* as their watchword are at work both in Germany and Austria. Their immediate objective, I understand, is the enactment of identical legislation in both parliaments whereby all Austrians are recognized as being German citizens automatically, and *vice versa*. Once this measure has been put through—and under the peace treaties there is no legal way to prevent it—*Anschluss* has been theoretically achieved. Another plan is said to be the proclamation of a single German nation, but with two separate political entities, Germany and Austria. The German nation is to be recognized in the world as comprising the citizens of both Germany and Austria, but in order not to come in conflict with the League the two countries would maintain their separate Governments. In short, a national but not a political union would be declared. This should satisfy the most pressing demands of the advocates of *Anschluss*, while at the same time affording no grounds for interference by France, Italy, or Czechoslovakia. It is quite generally understood in political circles that the reason why Germany herself has not broached the question of *Anschluss* at Geneva, and why she has soft-pedaled public discussion of the subject at home, is because of the delicately adjusted domestic political situation. The German Reichstag, as constituted at present, numbers 493 members, of whom 69 belong to the Catholic Center and 110 are Nationalists. The Socialists, with 131 votes, have, therefore, a comfort-

## “ANSCHLUSS”

able majority. But Austria, unlike Germany, is almost solidly Catholic, the Clericals and Nationalists between them being able to control the political situation. It will be seen, therefore, that were six and a half million Austrians admitted to German citizenship at this time it might well result in the overthrow of the present Socialist government and in changing the whole political complexion of the Reich. It is this domestic reason rather than any fear of outside intervention which is keeping the Government of the Reich quiet on the question of *Anschluss*.

As regards any attempts which might be made by the allies or the Little Entente to prevent an Austro-Germany union, the truth is, and every statesman in Europe knows it, that within the next few years, probably a very few, Germany will be amply strong enough to defy the opponents of *Anschluss* and to bring it about, if she so wills, whether they like it or not. Give her five more years in which to effect her recovery and there is not a nation in Europe which would dare to dispute her by arms on such an issue. So, to those who are really conversant with the situation the declarations of the statesmen in Paris, Rome, and Prague that *Anschluss* is out of the question, that it will never be permitted, are more amusing than convincing.

That *Anschluss* is inevitable no one who is familiar with all the factors involved can seriously deny, and, this being so, it might as well come sooner as later. The sooner the question is settled the sooner

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

central Europe will settle down. Germany and Austria have between them seventy millions of people, or more than one sixth of the total population of Europe. If these people, now divided into two political entities, decide that they wish to face the future as one, I fail to see how they can be reproached for desiring such union, and I can think of no nation, or no combination of nations, which could successfully oppose them.



THE PARLOUS POSITION OF POLAND



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE RESURRECTED LAND

**I**T seems to me that the one really big and fine thing accomplished by the treaty-makers at Paris was the resurrection of Poland. By that act they in a measure redeemed themselves for their numerous unsatisfactory compromises and unwise expedients, for their selfish, short-sighted, and in some cases utterly indefensible decisions. To give new life to a nation which had been dead politically for upward of a hundred years, to reunite its sundered fragments into a political entity, to restore to that entity its independence, and to set it on its feet as a going concern, was in itself a notable achievement, but it was also an act of historical reparation, a realization of a people's dreams—and history has shown that reparations and realizations of that sort are very rare. Nor were any people more deserving of political resurrection than the Poles, for no people in the Europe of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries suffered such humiliation and oppression. Yet, despite systematic and ruthless attempts to stamp it out, their spirit never died.

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

Until nearly the middle of the eighteenth century Poland was the second largest country in Europe, the dominions under the white eagle extending from the eastern watershed of the Oder to the banks of the Dnieper and beyond, from the shores of the Baltic almost to the Black Sea. Included in this vast empire, besides the Poles themselves, were the Lithuanians, the Letts, the White Russians, the Ukrainians, and the Cossacks of the Dnieper. Yet, despite her vastness, Poland was a moribund state, a long series of foreign wars and demoralizing internal dissensions having brought on that creeping paralysis which ultimately left her an easy prey to her immediate neighbors, the three great military monarchies of Europe, which had long regarded her with avaricious eyes.

The first partition of Poland, engineered by Frederick the Great of Prussia, Catherine II of Russia, and Joseph II of Austria, was effected in 1772, when she lost about a quarter of her territory and a fifth of her population. The ease with which this was accomplished whetted the appetites of Russia and Prussia, and twenty-one years later, in 1793, they tried it again. By the second partition Poland was reduced to one third of her original dimensions, the territories that were left her having a population of only about three and a half millions. The third partition was made in 1796, when Russia, Prussia, and Austria—their national emblems should have been vultures instead of eagles—once more swooped down

## THE RESURRECTED LAND

upon the bleeding carcass and devoured all that was left.

In 1807, however, Prussia having been reduced to the status of a second-class state by Napoleon, the French and Russian emperors, who between them held all Europe in their hands, meeting on the raft at Tilsit, agreed to construct an independent grand duchy from Prussia's share of the Polish spoils. The Grand Duchy of Warsaw, as it was called, was only an insignificant state, and from first to last was a mere reservoir of recruits for Napoleon, providing him, incidentally, with some of his finest troops—the famous Polish legions. Never independent in anything save name, its administration being controlled by the French, the grand duchy perished with the Grand Army in the retreat from Moscow, being overrun by the victorious Russians.

When the Congress of Vienna was convened in 1815 to determine what disposition should be made of the countries which had been freed from French suzerainty by the fall of Napoleon, there was a new deal all round. Of its Polish loot Prussia was permitted to retain Posen and Gnesen. Galicia remained in Austrian possession. Lithuania and Ruthenia were left to Russia. The remnant was constituted as the so-called congress kingdom under the Emperor of Russia as King of Poland. This small state, a sort of Russian protectorate, enjoyed a considerable measure of autonomy until the rebellion of 1830, when it was immediately reduced to the position of

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

a Russian province, the name of Poland thenceforward having little save sentimental significance.

Though the Republic of Poland as constituted at Versailles in 1919, plus several areas which the Poles forcibly appropriated afterward, by no means corresponds in size to the country as it was at the period of its greatest expansion, it is vastly larger than congress Poland, having an area of approximately 150,000 square miles—or 30 per cent. larger than Italy—with about twenty-nine million inhabitants. Of these, however, more than a third are of non-Polish origin, mainly Ruthenians, Russians, Jews, Germans, and Lithuanians, the country thus having on its hands a serious minority problem.

The transition from Germany to Poland is startling in its abruptness. You step back half a century in setting foot across the boundary line. Prosperity is succeeded by numerous signs of want; Teutonic discipline and order are supplanted by the lack of organization which is characteristic of the Slav; the splendid highways of the Reich give way to indifferent roads rutted by the wheels of ramshackle farm wagons. Once your papers have been scrutinized by the Polish frontier guards in their peculiar square-crowned schapskas, and the red-and-white striped bars have been raised to let you pass, you realize that you are now unmistakably in eastern Europe, in a land of apprehension and suspicion.

And Poland has good cause to be apprehensive



## THE RESURRECTED LAND

and suspicious, for of all the countries in Europe she is, it seems to me, in the most perilous position. The elements of danger are as great if not greater than in the Balkans. She is ringed about by enemies. On the west and north lies a Germany which is daily growing more powerful, bitterly resenting the creation of the corridor which cuts her off from East Prussia and wholly unreconciled to the settlement of the Silesian question. Astride the mouth of the Vistula, the only Polish river which flows directly into the salt water, is the free city of Danzig, its solidly German population never forgetting its racial and historical bonds with the Reich and never averse to creating friction. On the north is the great rich province of East Prussia, the stronghold of the *Junkers*, who attribute their alleged economic woes to the narrow peninsula of Polish territory which separates them from the Fatherland. To the northeast is Lithuania, its people embittered by the Polish seizure of the Kovno district with their historic capital, its frontier closed, and virtually in a state of war with Poland. On the east, for upward of six hundred miles, the ill-defined Polish frontiers march with those of Soviet Russia, cunning, dangerous, revengeful, sullenly biding its time. Occupying the entire southeastern corner of the republic is the bitterly disputed territory of eastern Galicia, torn against the will of its four million Ruthenian inhabitants from the Ukraine, to be held by Poland until its final fate is decided in 1944 by the plebiscite promised by



the League of Nations. On the south, along the ridge of the Carpathians, runs the boundary of Czechoslovakia, which, though officially amicable, has neither forgotten nor forgiven the Polish aggressions in Teschen. It will be seen, therefore, that Poland—barring Russia the fifth largest country of Europe in area and the fourth in population—is almost completely isolated, Rumania being the only one of her immediate neighbors with whom it may truthfully be said that she enjoys cordial relations.

The Poles will assure you—and I do not question their sincerity—that the external difficulties which beset them are not of their own making; that they are due solely to the jealousy of their neighbors, to their intransigence, their avarice, their desire for revenge. This is in a measure true, but only in a measure. For their present dangerous situation the Poles should themselves shoulder the major portion of the blame.

After having steeped themselves so long in the memories of their glorious past, it is hardly surprising that the Poles should think in grandiose terms, in large dimensions. The far-flung boundaries of the middle of the eighteenth century were obviously out of the question, for they would include more non-Polish than Polish populations, yet the Poles could not reconcile themselves to an ethnographic Poland; they could not forget those glorious pages of their history when the banner of the white eagle flaunted victoriously from the Warta to the Dnieper, from



THE FREE STATE OF DANZIG AND THE POLISH CORRIDOR



## THE RESURRECTED LAND

Kiev to Courland. Almost every Polish leader demanded that something approximating the Poland of those great days be created, no matter at what cost to the neighboring states. It was taken for granted that Danzig would become a Polish port, and many contended that even East Prussia should be included, notwithstanding the fact that the populations of both are solidly German. All eastern Galicia was likewise ear-marked by the Poles for their own, though a clear majority of its inhabitants are Ruthenians.

When these extreme and obviously unrealizable claims were rejected by the allies—to whom, be it remembered, Poland owed her very existence—she openly defied them and the League of Nations. In order to gain her ends in Lower Lithuania and Upper Silesia, Poland resorted to methods which are deserving of the gravest censure, as even her stoutest foreign champions are forced to admit. That in both cases she “got away with it” does not mitigate her guilt.

In the Middle Ages Lithuania had been an independent state and Vilna had been its capital. After the union of Lithuania with Poland the city became a center of Polish culture, and it has numerous Polish associations. It has a Polish university; in the Ostra Brama chapel is a statue of the Virgin greatly venerated by Polish Catholics; and the cathedral of St. Stanislaus contains the silver sarcophagus of St. Casimir, the greatest of the Polish kings. But its

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

population is, and always has been, predominantly Lithuanian.

The successive partitions of Poland brought Vilna under Russian rule, so that the question of its political disposal did not arise until Poland and Lithuania reëmerged, this time as separate and mutually unfriendly states, after the great war. In December, 1919, the Supreme Council in Paris laid down a provisional eastern frontier for Poland, the so-called "Curzon line," which assigned to the Poles most territories where the Polish element was in a majority, but excluded mixed and doubtful districts, among these being the city and province of Vilna, which were awarded to Lithuania. The district was occupied by the Bolsheviki upon their invasion of Poland in 1920, but after their retreat again passed into Lithuanian possession. This resulted in numerous clashes between Polish and Lithuanian troops, but the League of Nations finally obtained from the Poles a pledge to respect the Curzon line and to leave the Vilna district, at least for the time being, in Lithuanian hands. On these terms a Polish-Lithuanian armistice was signed.

But the ink on the armistice was scarcely dry before a Polish military adventurer, General Zeligowski, crossed the line at the head of a band of filibusters, drove the Lithuanians out of Vilna and occupied the greater part of the province. By this action the Poles broke both the armistice which they had signed with Lithuania and the pledge that they had



## THE RESURRECTED LAND

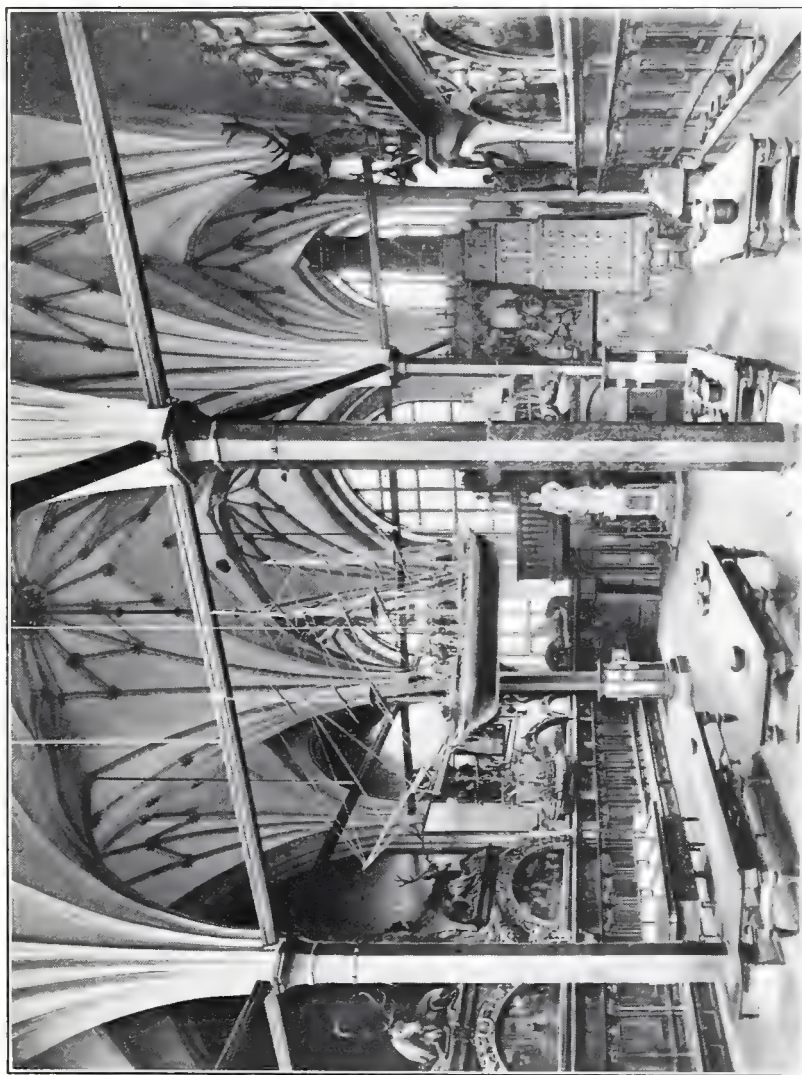
given to the League of Nations. It is true that the invasion was carried out by Polish officers acting on their own initiative and without official approval, yet the sympathy of the Warsaw government for the filibusters was unquestioned. That in the settlement of territorial disputes it pays to resort to arms rather than to arbitration was proved to the entire satisfaction of the Poles when, in 1923, the Conference of Ambassadors set the seal of its approval on Zeligowski's exploit by formally assigning the city of Vilna and the whole of the Lithuanian hinterland to Poland.

Inspired by Zeligowski's success, another Polish filibuster, a politician named Korfanty, invaded Upper Silesia in 1921 under almost identical conditions. Upper Silesia is a small, egg-shaped territory situated at the junction of the German, Polish, and Czechoslovak frontiers on the northern slopes of the Carpathians. Its political importance lies in its enormous underground wealth, its coal fields being among the most extensive in Europe. These, with its deposits of iron and other minerals, make the region of immense value from the economic standpoint. The treaty of Versailles provided that the inhabitants of Upper Silesia should be permitted to decide by plebiscite whether they preferred to remain with Germany or be transferred to Poland. The date of the plebiscite was set for March 20, 1921. Nine months before it was to be held, however, the Poles, aware that the vote was almost certain to go against

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

them, attempted to seize the country by force and confront the allies with a *fait accompli*. Armed bands occupied the disputed region; many Germans were killed; others were kidnapped and carried into Poland. British troops were thereupon marched into the country, the invaders were driven out, and the plebiscite was duly held under the supervision of an interallied commission. Despite Polish attempts at intimidation and the highly unneutral attitude of the French commissioner, the poll showed 717,122 votes for Germany and 483,514 for Poland.

The decision as to the allocation of the disputed districts was delayed, however, by controversies between the commissioners themselves, whereupon the Poles once more took matters into their own hands, Korfanty, the Polish politician to whom I have already referred, invading the country at the head of a well-organized force which he had raised, more or less openly, in Poland. Korfanty declared himself dictator, took over the administration, expelled the local officials, and ran things with a high hand, treating even the allied commissioners with such scant consideration that they were forced to withdraw to districts where the Poles were not in control. Korfanty's régime was marked by many outrages, his lawless followers plundering the villages, ill-treating the German inhabitants, and murdering many of them. The dispute had now assumed such proportions, and had become so embarrassing to the allies, that it was referred to the League of Nations. In-



ONCE THE SEAT OF JUNKER POWER

The interior, with its richly carved panelings and lofty, vaulted ceiling, is a superb example of the German Gothic style



## THE RESURRECTED LAND

credible as it may seem, that body utterly disregarded the wishes of the inhabitants as expressed by the plebiscite and awarded a region containing at least three quarters of the total mineral wealth of Upper Silesia to the Poles. France's influence in the councils of the League is generally supposed to explain a decision which is extremely difficult to defend.

View these incidents from whatever angle we will, we are forced to admit that Poland has shown herself singularly regardless of the rights of her neighbors, of the authority of the League of Nations, and of public opinion. This defiant attitude is all the more astonishing on the part of a nation whose welfare, whose continued existence even, is to an extraordinary degree dependent on international goodwill. If she chooses the road of justice and moderation in dealing with her neighbors, Poland may become a great state, but she will never become one until she abandons her present policy of taking what she wants by force and then blaming those whom she has despoiled for the resultant troubles. Though the Poles with whom I discussed the subject admitted readily enough that the country's foreign relations were in an unfortunate condition, not one of them would concede that Poland was in any way to blame, but insisted that the existing friction, north, east, south, and west, was due wholly to the machinations of her jealous neighbors. Their attitude reminds me of the proud mother, watching her son march past in



## EMBATTLED BORDERS

a military review, who exclaimed reprovingly, "Why, every one is out of step except my Johnny!"

A source of grave internal weakness to the young republic is the presence of large groups of more or less unfriendly aliens, over some of whom, at least, she extended her rule by methods which, as I have shown, are open to serious reproach. I fully realize the difficulty of drawing ethnographic frontiers which are even moderately just to all concerned, particularly in eastern Europe, where the various races are inextricably intermixed, yet it is my opinion that by restoring to their former owners certain districts whose inhabitants do not want Polish rule, Poland, even though her territory were slightly diminished, would be better off in the long run. For it is doubtful if these non-Polish elements can ever be assimilated, and hence will prove a constant source of irritation and weakness. This is particularly true in the case of eastern Galicia, where the Ruthenians, who form the majority of the population, unquestionably desire union with a democratic Russia, for by race, sentiment, and traditions they are allied to the Russians rather than to the Poles.

The Jews provide the most serious racial problem in Poland, however, and also the most perplexing, for there is no way to get rid of them. More than 10 per cent. of the total population of Poland are Jews, the members of the race being more numerous there than in any other country in the world save only Russia, whose Hebrew population has been reduced since

## THE RESURRECTED LAND

1914 from seven millions to only about three millions. For the traditional hatred which the Poles have for the Jews, and for the persecutions which the Chosen People have suffered in Poland, there is a twofold reason. In commerce and in the crafts the Jews competed so successfully with the Christians that they threatened to drive the latter out of business altogether, eventually being restricted by law. But the bitterest cause of complaint against them is that they have not espoused whole-heartedly the cause of the young republic, having worked for their racial rights rather than for those of the whole nation. Upon the recognition of Poland's independence in 1919, however, there began a marked improvement in the position of the Polish Jews. The Polish leaders recognized that public opinion throughout the world strongly disapproved of the treatment which the Jews had received under the Russian régime, and they also realized that the financial path of the young republic would be a hard one unless steps were taken to conciliate the great Jewish money lords, who had it in their power to refuse much needed loans. Accordingly, Poland signed a treaty with the Allied and Associated Powers whereby the Jews are included among the "racial, religious or linguistic minorities"; Yiddish is recognized as a language; they are empowered to manage their own schools; and it is provided that they shall not be under any disability by reason of their refusal to attend courts of law or vote at elections on the Sabbath. As a result better

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

relations between the two races have been established, and there is no reason why they should not continue to improve provided the Jews abstain from taking an active part in politics.

Poland is seriously handicapped, from the standpoint of national security, by possessing no natural frontiers save only in the Carpathians. The whole country is, in fact, a vast, undulating plain, open everywhere except in the extreme south to invasion. Yet the amazing fertility of the soil and the facility of communication by land and river have made this plain the cradle of the Polish race. Indeed, the very name of Poland is derived from it, Wielkopolska and Wielkoplane being the Slav terms for the great plain and its inhabitants.

Because of her weak frontiers and the anxiety to which they give rise, Poland considers it necessary to maintain an army which is out of all proportion to the size of the country and which the young and impoverished state can ill afford. The peace strength of the military establishment has been fixed at 250,000 men, a third of the total revenue of the country being designated for the upkeep of the army in the budget of 1927. A better idea of what this means will be obtained when it is remarked that were the United States to maintain a peace-time establishment of the same relative strength it would require a standing army of a million men. It is obvious that Poland cannot continue to support such a burden indefinitely, the assertions of her military leaders notwithstand-





THE HALL OF THE MERCHANT PRINCES

Its curious circular staircase, its exquisitely carved doors, and richly decorated ceilings are unsurpassed in Europe



## THE RESURRECTED LAND

ing, for if her army continues big her debt will rise and her taxes, already overburdensome, will increase proportionately. For financial reasons, if for no other, it would seem imperative that she draw in her horns.

Among the Poles with whom I talked I found an almost fatalistic conviction that they would some day have to fight for their new territory, and among many of them a firm belief that when that time comes they will have to fight alone. Until quite recently Poland has relied upon France, but the realization is growing that much may happen in the next few years to make French military intervention extremely impossible. Poland's only other hope was in England, and that was shattered when Sir Austen Chamberlain, speaking before the League of Nations, made it amply clear that under no circumstances would England send troops to defend any of the new and artificial frontiers in eastern Europe. This explains why a considerable number of Poles are now advocating a rapprochement with Russia. This party is convinced that, if the present friction east and west continues, a new partition is inevitable, and that the only way to avert it is for Poland to form an alliance with one or the other of her two powerful neighbors; and, between Germany and Russia, the latter appears the lesser evil. It seems extremely doubtful, however, whether such a scheme is possible of realization, owing to the traditional hatred of the Poles for the Russians, their deep-seated distrust of the

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

Soviet Government, and the marked differences between the two nations in mode of thought, culture, and religion, for Poland is a nation of western ideas, while Russia by contrast is almost an Oriental one.

I like the Poles so much—next to the Hungarians, whom they greatly resemble, I find them the most likable people in Europe—that it is difficult to write of them with detachment, for their numerous virtues tend to blind one to their shortcomings. They are the most intensely patriotic people I know. This is a splendid trait, but the trouble is that the patriotism of the Poles has been so long pent up, they have nursed it so assiduously in secret, that, being suddenly released, it has burst into something perilously akin to chauvinism. In the old days the Poles learned to think in wide spaces, with more force than restraint, and they refuse to recognize the limitations which present-day political conditions must impose on their ambitions. Born soldiers, like the Irish welcoming a fight for a fight's sake, their courage verges on recklessness. They are invariably courteous and hospitable, generous to the point of prodigality, light-hearted, enthusiastic, irresponsible, incurably romantic, and great gentlemen. Everything they do is done on the grand scale; about them there is nothing of the picayune. Those of the upper classes are delightful companions. On the other hand, they have at times made me so furiously angry that my judgment has been warped by my exasperation. Like their fellow-Slavs they are stubborn, set in their

## THE RESURRECTED LAND

ways, and disinclined to listen to reason; like the Latins they are exceedingly sensitive to even the most friendly criticism. They are impatient, often suspicious, of opposition, and no one can hope to retain their friendship who does not see with them eye to eye, who is not willing to go with them all the way. This obstinacy is regrettable for their own sake, because it will keep them in hot water as long as it is persisted in; for my sake, because I admire the Poles and should be sorry to lose their friendship through plain speaking.

Warsaw suggested to me a decayed gentleman of proud and ancient lineage who, having rehabilitated his fortunes, is beginning to spruce up. Under Russian rule it was a down-at-heel and none too clean provincial city, living in the memories of its glorious past, but now that it has become the capital of one of the largest countries in Europe it has bought new garments, polished its shoes, and is beginning to take pride in its appearance. An imposing new bridge has been thrown across the Vistula; the bone-racking cobble pavements are giving place to asphalt; red taxis, recklessly driven, are rapidly supplanting the ramshackle Russian droshkies with their flat-capped, blue-coated drivers; an enormous railway station is nearing completion; the great Orthodox cathedral, whose presence was resented by the Catholic Poles as a symbol of Russian religious domination, has been demolished to make space for a broad parade ground; at the entrance to the Saxon Garden steel-

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

helmeted sentries guard the flame which flickers above the tomb of the Unknown Soldier; thanks to the efforts of a British mission the police are as smart and nearly as efficient as London bobbies; and the whole city has undergone a much-needed house-cleaning.

The Zamek Krowleski, or royal castle, built by the dukes of Mazovia a thousand years ago, is now the official residence of the president of Poland. Long used as a barracks for the Russian soldiery, and consequently fallen into a sad state of disrepair, the restorers have discovered beneath layers of plaster some exquisite carvings and mural decorations, and it is rapidly being transformed into one of the most beautiful palaces in Europe. The former Saxon palace, once the residence of the Polish kings, is now the War Office and resounds once more to the clang of sabers and the clink of spurs, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs occupies cramped quarters hard by.

To the north of the castle is the old town, Stare Miaste, the Jewish quarter, with its ancient gabled houses and narrow tortuous streets, and still farther north the Alexander citadel, set on an eminence which permits its guns to command the city. In Russian times it served as a standing threat to the rebellious Poles, many of whom perished within its ramparts. Here is the notorious "Tenth Pavilion" where Polish political prisoners were confined and sometimes tortured, and here also is the Gate of the Mar-



## THE RESURRECTED LAND

tyrs, giving access to a weed-grown slope beside the Vistula, with a long row of wooden crosses above ill-tended graves. At one end of this walled inclosure, still stands the gallows on which countless Polish patriots died in czarist days, and close by is an ancient tree, its trunk riddled with bullet holes, where other Poles were executed during the German occupation. That garden is the Gethsemane of Poland, filled with memories of tragedy and heroism. It is a thousand pities that it is not treated with more reverence and care.

The inhabitants of Warsaw number close to a million, and of these fully one third are Jews. Strolling through the Stare Miaste one might well imagine himself back in the Middle Ages, for the cobbled thoroughfares, lined by old, old buildings, lend to the district a strikingly mediæval atmosphere, which is accentuated by the somber habits of the Chosen People. Nearly all of the men have straggling beards, with long curls hanging down before their ears—many of the old men look like the patriarchs of the Old Testament, and I saw one or two younger ones who resembled the pictured Christ—and all of them, high and low alike, wear the close-fitting black caps and the long high-buttoned shapeless coats which are the distinctive badges of the Jew in Poland.

“Now you can better understand,” remarked the friend who guided me through this swarming, evil-smelling ghetto, “the gravity of Poland’s Jewish problem. Do you realize that in Warsaw alone there



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are four times as many Jews as there are in the whole of Palestine?"

I have already spoken of the improved condition of the Jews under the terms of the minorities treaty. By way of supplementing this, the Polish Government in 1924 concluded a kind of pact with the Hebrew leaders by which it promised to promote in every way the religious and racial interests of the Jewish community, while the representatives of Jewry pledged themselves loyally to support the young republic, which theretofore they had not done with any marked enthusiasm. The racial and religious antipathies of the Polish people are so deeply rooted, however, that considerable friction between the two races still persists. But this is not altogether surprising when you take human nature into consideration, for the Poles are an easy-going race, fond of high living and addicted to lavish spending, so that consequently much of the wealth of the country has passed into Jewish hands. As most of the leaders of Soviet Russia are of the Hebrew faith, and bitterly resent the treatment which their co-religionists have received heretofore in Poland, this perhaps explains why relations between the Poles and their eastern neighbors have continued so unsatisfactory, consisting mainly of a continuous series of "incidents," accompanied by mutual insults, outrages, and threats of an appeal to arms.

I was received at the palace by President Moscicki, a slim, debonair, extremely handsome man with most

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engaging manners and great personal charm. Our conversation developed nothing of significance, however, for it was deftly guided into safe channels by an astute gentleman from the Foreign Office, whose principal duty, he confided to me afterward, was to see that the chief of state made no political *faux pas* in talking with foreigners. Ignatz Moscicki was elected president of Poland at the bidding of Marshal Pilsudski, and, in view of all the circumstances, I don't see how the old dictator could have made a better choice. For the president loyally carries out the orders of his master, he is suave and tactful, and he lends great dignity to his office. When he is in evening dress, with the azure ribbon of the White Eagle slanting across his shirt-front, this one-time professor and former business man presents as decorative and distinguished a figure as you would find anywhere. But, like all European presidents, he is a puppet—I do not mean this disrespectfully, but the presidents of European democracies enjoy little real power—and cleverer fingers than his manipulate the strings of government from behind the scenes.

The man whom I most desired to meet, the power behind the presidential chair, was Marshal Joseph Pilsudski, the real master of Poland. But to meet the dictator is not a simple matter. He is in poor health as a result of his long incarcerations in Russian and German prisons; he is jealously guarded by his staff officers, who wish to save him from unnecessary fatigue; and since the *coup d'état* of May, 1926,

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when upward of two thousand persons were killed or wounded in the streets of Warsaw—a circumstance which the marshal did not anticipate and which greatly grieved him—he has rarely shown himself in public and has received few visitors. It was therefore with both gratification and surprise that, on the very day of my departure, I received word from the American Legation that the marshal would receive me at the palace of the Belvedere that afternoon.

The palace of the Belvedere, a squat building of no great dignity, stands behind high iron palings at the end of the Ujazdowska, which is the Champs Elysées of Warsaw. After a brief wait in an ante-chamber I was shown into a spacious, high-ceilinged, simply furnished room whose open windows commanded charming views of the Lazienki Gardens, with glimpses of the Vistula beyond. Against one wall was a narrow camp-bed, in a corner was a stand of regimental colors, and the surface of the broad desk set between the windows had been cleared of books and papers to make space for the game of solitaire which the dictator was playing when I entered.

I looked with interest at the grizzled man in the gray and silver uniform who rose to greet me, for he is one of the most remarkable figures of our time. The dictator of Poland is now in his sixty-first year, but owing to the vicissitudes of his life he appears considerably older, though his powers of energy and endurance still surpass those of most younger men.



A LITHUANIAN MARKET TOWN

Shavli, next to Kovno the largest place in Lithuania, looks like a cross between a Nevada mining camp and a Texas oil town. The broad, unpaved market-square is crowded with ramshackle Russian farm wagons, droves of cattle, herds of sheep and swine





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The scowl, so characteristic of his photographs, was, on this occasion at least, entirely absent. He seldom smiles, or, if he does, it is hidden by his drooping mustache, but beneath his heavily thatched eyebrows I detected a twinkle of friendliness and humor.

As he motioned me to a chair and proffered me a cigarette I called to mind all that I had heard of this extraordinary man. His career reads like that of an improbable character of fiction. He has lived more stories than Kipling or Doyle could invent. When still in his 'teens he became involved in a plot against the czar and was condemned to penal servitude in Siberia. Returning to Poland after spending a half decade in convict camps below the Arctic Circle, he commenced the publication of a secret paper, the "Workman," which he edited, printed, and distributed himself. But the agents of the Third Section had him under observation, and in 1900 Pilsudski was again arrested and for a year was kept in solitary confinement in the "Tenth Pavilion" of the Warsaw citadel. He simulated insanity in order to keep from becoming insane and was transferred to a hospital in St. Petersburg, whence he was rescued the following year through an ingenious plot executed by his Socialist friends.

After a year or so in exile he went to Cracow, in Austrian Galicia, where he proceeded to organize Polish insurrectionary bands. At one period he was a sort of Polish Robin Hood, the leader of a band of daring outlaws who held up and robbed the Rus-

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sian mail trains, devoting the proceeds of their exploits to furthering the cause of Polish liberty. The government of the czar put a huge price on his head; he knew that were he captured he would meet a sudden end on the scaffold or before the rifles of a firing party.

When Austria declared war on Russia he sided with Austria and, though he possessed no technical military training, was given command of a brigade, but after the collapse of Poland's historic enemy he turned against the central powers. In 1917 he was arrested by the Germans and imprisoned in the fortress of Magdeburg but was released on the outbreak of the German revolution. Hastening to Warsaw, he was given supreme command of the Polish forces, with the title of First Marshal of Poland, and proclaimed himself head of the National Government. On November 18, 1918, he notified the world of the formation of an independent state of Poland.

During the first year of the young republic's existence it was fortunate in having as its premier and minister of foreign affairs the world-famous musician, Ignace Paderewski, who demonstrated that he could play on public sentiment at home and abroad as skilfully as on the ivory keys. Paderewski proceeded to Paris to urge Poland's claims; Pilsudski raised an army to defend them. But one was a far-seeing statesman who realized the necessity of Poland's adopting a policy of moderation and conciliation; the other was a blunt soldier who de-

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manded the recognition of Poland's most extreme claims and believed in using force to attain them. Paderewski believed in rapprochement with Russia; Pilsudski tended toward an understanding with the Germans. Realizing that he could not conclude peace with the Soviet Government in view of the violent opposition of the Polish military party, Paderewski resigned office in November, 1919, and, after representing Poland for two years at the League of Nations, abandoned his political career and retired to his estate in California.

With the retirement of Paderewski the military party found itself freed of all restraint and in the spring of 1920 began an offensive against Russia, but a strong counter-offensive by the soviets turned the tables for a time. When the invaders were at the very gates of Warsaw and the fall of that city seemed certain, Pilsudski, disregarding the opinions of all of his military advisers, including that of the chief of the French general staff, General Weygand, concentrated his troops along the River Wieprz and by a lightning attack, which he led in person, broke through the Russian front, scattered the Red forces, and turned back the tide of bolshevism.

Shortly thereafter he withdrew from public life, but, becoming exasperated by the increased factional wrangling, he undertook in May, 1926, to set Poland's house in order by a military demonstration against the Government. What he had confidently expected to be a bloodless *coup d'état* ended in three

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days' fighting in the streets of the capital with heavy casualties. The Government fell, the president resigned, and Pilsudski himself was elected in his stead. But he refused to accept the office, recommending Professor Moscicki as the most suitable man for the job, while retaining for himself, as minister of war and chairman of the Supreme Army Council, the mastery of Poland.

Despite this somewhat lengthy résumé of Pilsudski's astonishing career—for it is impossible to understand him without knowing something of his background—it is no part of my intention to here set down a record of my conversation with the marshal. Moreover, I made it clear at the outset that I did not seek an "interview," which perhaps accounts for the freedom with which he talked to me. But his answers to some of my questions seem to me worth repeating, for no one outside of Russia is in a better position to know what is happening in that country, or to pass judgment on it, than Pilsudski.

I had alluded to the reports which had recently appeared in the newspapers of the execution of twenty prominent Russians by the Bolsheviki in retaliation for England's action in breaking off commercial relations with the Soviet Government.

The dictator smiled grimly.

"Twenty!" he exclaimed. "The reports of our intelligence service indicate that there were several hundred executions. Not all in Moscow, of course, but throughout Russia. Bolshevism used the Arcs







#### ROD AND REEL IN THE NORTH

Some of the best fishing in Europe is to be had on the Latvian rivers, preferably from a raft floating leisurely downstream to the sea

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incident as a pretext for a wholesale massacre of its internal enemies."

I asked the marshal if the Bolshevik régime showed any signs of collapsing.

"Not at present," he replied. "We have reason to believe that Russia is in desperate straits financially and economically, and that the peasants are showing signs of increasing discontent, but the Bolshevik Government is able to keep itself in power because it has control of the army, which, though probably not as efficient as has been claimed, is nevertheless a formidable fighting machine.

"There will be no sudden collapse of bolshevism, in my opinion," he continued. "There is no element in Russia sufficiently coherent and well organized to offer any serious opposition to the present régime, and when disaffection appears it is put down with a ruthless hand. There is no doubt that the Bolshevik leaders are worried, however, as was shown by the recent executions. But I believe that the end is still far off, and that when it comes it will come gradually, by evolution rather than revolution."

"Have you any reason to believe that Russia is meditating an attack on Poland?"

"None," he replied emphatically. "We are too well prepared. The Bolsheviks are afraid of us. If they make any threat in the west it is more likely to be against Rumania in an attempt to recover Bessarabia."

I suggested that Poland, sandwiched between two

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powerful and hostile neighbors, was in an unenviable position.

"Yes," he admitted, "and we must work out our own salvation. We have a powerful and loyal ally in France, it is true, but France has her own worries on the Rhine. In the event of war we would certainly have the moral support of France, and perhaps she would aid us financially, but we are fully aware that we must be prepared to fight our battles alone."

The question of the corridor cropped up, as it always does in discussions of Poland.

"It is not a corridor at all," the marshal asserted with emphasis, "if by that you mean a passage cut through non-Polish territory. Pomerelia is, and always has been, inhabited by a preponderantly Polish population. It belongs to Poland historically and ethnographically. The Germans cannot become reconciled to the fact that this strip of purely Polish territory cuts them off from East Prussia. But which is the most important—that two and a half million East Prussians should have a bridge connecting them with Germany, or that twenty-nine million Poles should have an outlet to the sea?"

The marshal had spoken in French, with occasional lapses into German, but when I was taking my leave he made some jesting remark in my own tongue.

"So you speak English, *mon maréchal*?" I said in some surprise.

"I don't speak it," he replied, "but I understand

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it after a fashion, at least as it is spoken by Englishmen. But—" and his eyes twinkled, "I have great difficulty in understanding English as it is spoken by Americans."

Marshal Pilsudski has summed up his creed in half a dozen words: "Romanticism of aims—realism of methods." When he speaks of romanticism he shows how thoroughly he understands the character of the Polish people, for, as I have said elsewhere, they are incurable romantics. But it may not be said with equal truth that they are realists, for it is not in their nature to accept unpleasant facts and adjust themselves to them. The astounding measure of success they achieved at Versailles, their almost miraculous victory over the Russians, the ease with which they effected their *coups d'état* in Upper Silesia and Vilna, and the abject surrender of the League of Nations on both questions—all these have gone to their heads; they are suffering from what the alienists describe as "delusions of grandeur." They are convinced that Poland should pursue the traditions of its "golden age"—the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries—ignoring the stubborn fact that the exigencies of present-day European politics must make it impossible for them to fully realize their grandiose aspirations.

There is no question that within the last two or three years the ties binding Poland and France have sensibly slackened. The Poles, haughty, headstrong, and inordinately proud, deeply resent the patroniz-



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ing attitude of the French, they are tired of being treated as France's little brother. The French assertions that the military mission under General Weygand saved Warsaw from capture by the Bolsheviks in 1920 are hotly denied by the Poles, who attribute their victory, and with reason, to the genius of Marshal Pilsudski. The visit of Marshal Foch to Warsaw in 1923 aroused the fear that Poland might be committing herself to a secret military alliance; the French loan of 400 million francs for the purchase of war material in France was regarded with suspicion as pointing in the same direction. Moreover, in order to meet the huge cost of maintaining her army, Poland's natural resources—forests, oil fields, etc.—have been heavily mortgaged to French capitalists. The French have further irritated the Poles by demanding that Poland shall purchase her military supplies only in French markets. The truth is that the Poles feared, and with considerable reason, that their country might become a financial vassal of France, a cat's-paw to pull French chestnuts out of the fire.

Nor was Polish opinion easily reconciled to the Locarno pact. The arrangement was reluctantly accepted, because there was nothing else to do; but so strong was the feeling that Poland was being abandoned by her ally that it even brought about a temporary rapprochement with Soviet Russia. The French, on their part, have become alarmed by Poland's aggressive attitude toward Germany and







You can't really blame this gentleman of Pistany for his reluctance to appear in public in his fringed



"HURRY UP, JAN, OR WE'LL BE LATE FOR CHURCH"

trousers . . . but his lady friend, being eager to show off her new dress, is rapidly losing patience with him

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Lithuania; they have begun to ask themselves whether Poland is not too hot-headed and irresponsible to make an altogether safe partner, and to wonder just how far they have committed themselves to espouse her quarrels.

Realizing that French military help is no longer to be depended on in an emergency, the Poles have recently concluded a defensive alliance with Rumania and have even extended the hand of friendship to Czechoslovakia, which, however, is still smarting from the remembrance of Polish aggressions in Teschen. Why, it may be asked, does not Poland join the Little Entente? The answer is easy. Poland has no quarrel with the Hungarians, against whom the Little Entente is directed; on the contrary, she has for them only the friendliest feelings. Czechoslovakia, on the other hand, which is the leading spirit of the Little Entente, has no intention of espousing Poland's quarrels with either Germany or Russia. Furthermore, Polish and Czechoslovak interests are bound to conflict as long as the fate of eastern Galicia remains in abeyance, for the Czechs hope, by acquiring that territory, to establish a common frontier with Russia. Nor does the third member of the Little Entente, Yugoslavia, see any reason why she should become embroiled in Poland's quarrels, particularly as she has numerous troubles of her own. The truth is that the members of the Little Entente hesitate about taking into the firm such a headstrong and unruly a partner. Until Poland

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shows a greater willingness to give and take, until she abandons her provocative attitude toward her neighbors, she will remain isolated and apprehensive.

On our journey from Warsaw to Danzig we followed the valley of the Vistula, the great river, six hundred and fifty miles in length, which is the Mississippi of Poland. The roads in the so-called corridor were much better than I had anticipated, but they are, after all, old German roads, for this region was until very recently a part of West Prussia, or Pomerelia, as the Poles prefer to call it. Outwardly it has been completely Policized, the German signs along the roads and over the shops having been replaced by Polish ones. But I am not altogether certain that the sentiments of the people have been changed so completely. At one town where we stopped for lunch—I think it was Laskowitz—a Polish patriotic demonstration was in progress, the streets being gay with scarlet-and-white banners. But there was a noticeable lack of enthusiasm on the part of many of the onlookers. They reminded me of the undergraduates of a college whose football team has been defeated, standing by morosely while the victors indulge in a snake-dance and toss their hats hilariously over the goal-post bars.

The term "corridor" is anathema to the Poles, who resent its use as violently as the Rumanians object to being called a Balkan nation. They will tell you that Pomerelia is, and ethnically always has

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been, an integral part of Poland, and have distributed tons of propaganda literature in support of their contention. Polish and German statistics on the population of the corridor differ so widely that it is utterly impossible to reconcile them, but my own opinion is that the majority of the inhabitants are of Polish extraction, though they have lived so long under German rule that it is often difficult to distinguish between the two races. Moreover, a large part of the German population was planted there by artificial means, as for many years the Germans, by means of wholesale colonizations, made systematic attempts to Germanize this ethnic pathway to the sea.

It was the dream of all Poles that the peace settlement should give them a much broader thoroughfare than they received, but a strip only fifty miles across was all that could be assigned to Poland on ethnic grounds. Even the Vistula, which from the earliest times has been regarded as a Polish river throughout its length, was not given to Poland in its entirety, for athwart its mouth lies the solidly German free city of Danzig. Poland enjoyed a broad outlet to the Baltic until the partitions in the latter part of the eighteenth century, so that in asking that it be restored to her she was basing her claim on historic grounds. Yet by her demand she confronted the treaty-makers at Versailles with their most difficult and dangerous problem. They settled it by the expedient of the corridor, but no one who is familiar



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with the facts believes that that is a permanent solution. Even if one accepts the contention of the Poles that the population of Pomerelia is indisputably Polish, the thoughtful person is inclined to question the wisdom—not the ethics—of placating them by dividing so potentially powerful a nation as Germany into two parts.

To better visualize the situation thus created you will imagine Canada, after a victorious war with the United States, demanding the cession of Vermont and Massachusetts on the plea that she needed an outlet to the ice-free water, supporting her demand by the reminder that these States were British until the latter part of the eighteenth century, which was about the time Prussia took Pomerelia from Poland. If you can imagine this demand being granted, Boston and its immediate hinterland being made into a free state under the League of Nations, and New Hampshire and Maine cut off from the rest of the United States by the Canadian corridor thus created, you will have a tolerably close parallel to what has happened in West Prussia.

The Poles assured me that the inconvenience which the corridor threatened to cause the German railways has been reduced to a minimum, and it is quite true that through passengers can cross the corridor—it is barely half a hundred miles in width—in locked carriages without being required to obtain Polish visas or submit to Polish customs examinations, but the delays incident to crossing two fron-





RIGA

Seen from the harbor, the old town, dominated by the spires of the Dom and St. Peter's, has preserved something of its  
Hanseatic aspect

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tiers have had a more serious effect on road traffic and are undeniably irritating. Whether the alleged commercial stagnation in East Prussia is due to the existence of the corridor, or to Germany's refusal to conclude a commercial treaty with Poland, I could not determine.

Mind you, now, I am not criticizing the abstract justice of Poland's claim to this gateway to the Baltic—Marshal Piłsudski summed it up admirably when he said that it was a question of the necessities of twenty-nine million Poles or the convenience of two and a half million East Prussians—but I am questioning its wisdom. Nothing is more certain than that the Germans will never become reconciled to the present arrangement, and as long as they remain unreconciled the corridor will be a standing threat to the security of Poland and to the peace of Europe.

The corridor is, of course, a political anomaly and a strategic absurdity, and no one, I suppose, seriously believes that it will last very long. Its creation was, as a shrewd English observer has remarked, an act of insanity only possible during the period of delirium that followed the war. My opinion may not be worth much, but here, in my belief, is about what will eventually happen. Danzig, which is as German as Hamburg, will be restored to the Reich, together with the northern end of the present corridor, thereby reuniting Germany and East Prussia. By such a readjustment Poland would lose a few

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score square miles of territory and a few thousand inhabitants (a considerable proportion of them Germans), but such a loss would be insignificant compared with the gains of territory and population she has made at the expense of Lithuania. Danzig in its present status, a "free city" which is denied its freedom, is far more anti-Polish than it would be as a German city competing for Polish trade. Because of the restrictions to which they are subject in Danzig, the Poles are building a port of their own at Gdynia, a few miles to the west of Danzig, an undertaking which is costing them an enormous sum. Gdynia, in the form of a small enclave, the Poles would be permitted to retain, the port being connected with their main railway system by a short line crossing German territory, uninterrupted railway communication across this intervening strip of German soil being secured by treaty. Under such an arrangement Poland would retain her access to the sea; she would not lose Danzig because Danzig does not belong to her anyway; and, the chief cause of friction between the two countries being removed, her relations with Germany would become amiable and might become even friendly. A solution such as I have outlined is open to numerous criticisms, of course, but it would at least be infinitely preferable to the present muddle, which, if permitted to continue, will sooner or later lead to war.

There is also the possibility—though in view of the existing friction between the two countries I



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must confess that it is a rather remote one—that Poland may come to an understanding, perhaps even effect some sort of a union, with Lithuania, thereby obtaining a second outlet to the sea through Memel. Such an arrangement is really not as far-fetched as it may seem, for it must be remembered that Poland and Lithuania were united for upward of four hundred years, that both peoples are Slavs, their languages have much in common, and they have the same religion. Moreover, the harbor of Memel could be made as good, or nearly as good, as that of Danzig, and infinitely better than the one which the Poles are constructing at Gdynia.

Notwithstanding the violent assertions of her nationalists that Poland's frontiers are unalterable, save outwardly; despite the fact that at the moment of writing Lithuania is virtually in a state of war with Poland, those whose opinions on the subject I value most believe that one or both of the arrangements I have outlined will provide the eventual solution to Europe's most delicate and perplexing problem.

Of all the cities of northern Europe, Danzig has best preserved its mediæval aspect and atmosphere. Put the burghers into doublets, ruffs, and small-clothes, abolish the yellow tram-cars which go clanging through the town, and you would have the place very much as it was in the days of its Hanseatic glory, when the great commercial cities, from Utrecht in the west to Reval in the east, banded

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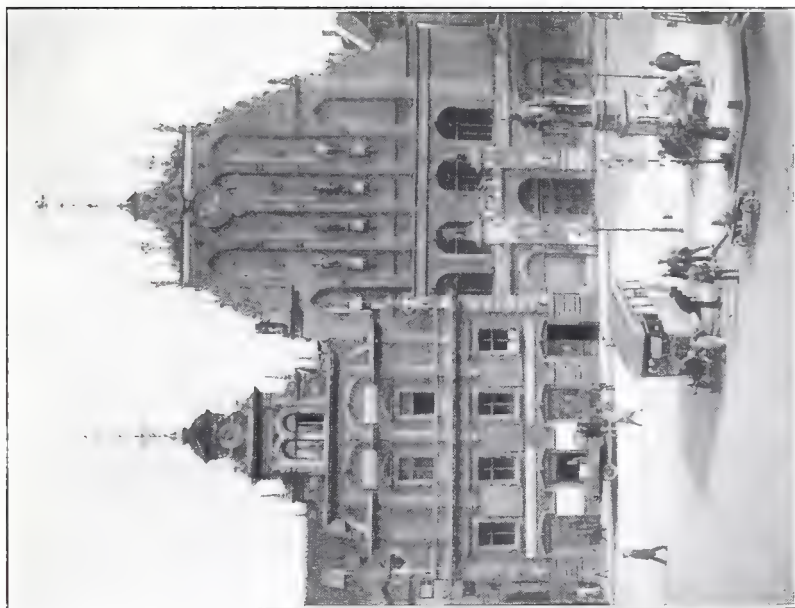
themselves together in the loose but powerful confederacy which guarded the great trade route from the North Sea to the Baltic. (Hanse, by way of information, means a guild of merchants, a commercial confederation.)

Architecturally, Danzig remains almost unchanged since the Middle Ages, not even the Grande Place in Brussels presenting so perfect a mediæval *mise en scène* as the Lange Markt. No modern buildings have been permitted to obtrude themselves into the streets of the old town, which are still lined by the grand old patrician houses of the merchant princes—in Germany they were styled *Junkers*, or squires—with their high, stepped gables and elaborately decorated, richly gilded façades, their carved and brass-bound doors opening on broad stone terraces which project like miniature peninsulas into the cobbled thoroughfares. Though the encircling ramparts, from whose bastions the muzzles of great guns peered seaward, have been transformed into peaceful parks and pleasant promenades, the ancient Torture Tower still guards the entrance to the inner city; the Mottlau still bristles with the masts of shipping flying the flags of many nations; on Sundays the townsfolk still chant old Lutheran hymns in the dim interior of St. Mary's, one of the largest Protestant churches in Christendom.

The city has had a picturesque and varied history, having been held in turn by Pomeranians, Brandenburgers, Danes, the Teutonic Knights,



Rising more than four hundred feet above the roofs of Riga is the beautiful spire of St. Peter's, built nearly a century before the discovery of America



The House of the Black Heads, originally the meeting-place of foreign merchants, is even older, having been erected in 1330



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Poles, Russians, Saxons, French, and Germans. In 1807, during the Napoleonic wars, it was bombarded and captured by Marshal Lefebvre, whom the emperor rewarded with the title of Duke of Danzig. That rough old soldier married, you will recall, a washerwoman of the imperial guard, whose goings-on provided the theme for "The Duchess of Danzig." The palace formerly occupied by Field Marshal von Mackensen, the German commander-in-chief in East Prussia and the conqueror of Rumania, is now the official residence of the Dutch lawyer who is high commissioner of the League of Nations.

The city of Danzig is set a few miles back from the sea on the Mottlau, a tributary of the Vistula, and in summer the Danzigers flock in great numbers to the near-by bathing resort of Zoppot, on the shores of the Baltic. Zoppot has a superb beach of white sand, one fine hotel and numerous less pretentious ones, and some excellent restaurants where one may idle away a summer's day quite pleasantly, eating good food and listening to good music.

The disposition of Danzig presented the treaty-makers at Versailles with a baffling problem, and one which they solved with more expediency than wisdom. It had once belonged to Poland and the Poles demanded it back again, for it commands the mouth of the Vistula and is their logical outlet to the sea. Yet its population is so solidly and aggressively German that even the victorious allies foresaw inevitable trouble if they handed it over to



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Poland. On the other hand, it must be severed from Germany, they decided, because in no other way was it possible to secure that "free and secure access to the sea" which had been promised to the Poles. The allies were never at a loss to invent ingenious expedients, however, and this one they met by making the city of Danzig, with its immediate hinterland, a free city under the protection of the League of Nations. In area the free city is three fourths the size of Rhode Island, containing some fifteen cities and villages, with 384,000 inhabitants, 96 per cent. of whom are Germans.

Danzig, it should be understood, is not a free city in the usual meaning of that term, its freedom of action being hampered by numerous restrictions. It has its own flag, issues its own postage stamps, and coins its own currency, but it is a unit in the Polish customs administration; its railways are under the direction of the Polish railway administration; and the Polish Government also controls the free city's foreign relations. This anomalous arrangement has been the cause of endless friction and hard feeling, exasperating the Poles and irritating the Germans.

As a matter of fact, the governments at Danzig and Warsaw are constantly at loggerheads, the Germans losing no opportunity to bedevil their neighbors and the Poles insisting on every iota of the rights granted them under the treaty—and then some. The Danzig government maintains that the free city enjoys sovereign rights as an independ-

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ent member of the community of nations, whereas the Poles contend that it was created for their special benefit and that its claims to sovereignty are admissible only in so far as they do not conflict with Polish interests. These diametrically opposed points of view have resulted in a long series of unpleasant incidents, most of them trivial and some of them childish, forty-seven such disputes having been adjudicated in a space of only four years by the high commissioner of the League of Nations. Until November, 1927, the Danzig Parliament was controlled by the Nationalists, who are violently anti-Polish and pro-German, but the elections held in that month changed the legislature's complexion, the Social Democrats and Liberals gaining the balance of power. This was loudly acclaimed by the Poles as signifying that Danzig was becoming pro-Polish, but it really means nothing of the sort. What it does mean is that the Danzigers, who are first, last, and all the time hard-headed business men, realized that if the friction continued, the Poles would divert a large share of their enormously important trade to their new port at Gdynia and Danzig would suffer accordingly. The Danzigers do not love the Poles a whit more than they did before, but they have come to the conclusion that it will be more profitable to be on amicable terms with them.

The pettiness of the controversies which have kept the Danzigers and the Poles stirred up for nearly a decade is illustrated by the quarrel over the post-

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boxes. According to the terms of the treaty, Poland is entitled to maintain a postal service only in the harbor, this concession being granted her for the purpose of expediting her communications with abroad. But not long ago she proceeded to erect post-boxes bearing the emblem of the white eagle throughout the business section of the town. The Danzigers protested, and when their protests were ignored they one night smeared the objectionable boxes in the free city colors. Poland appealed to the League of Nations, which, after weighty deliberations, extended the area of the "harbor" to include most of the city. So the boxes remain, a visible sign of Poland's triumph and Danzig's discomfiture, but no one uses them.

Though the free city is in customs union with Poland, it has the right to appoint its own customs officials, who are naturally Germans. Now the Poles import enormous quantities of war material through Danzig, but the last thing they desired was to have these munitions examined and checked by the Danzig customs inspectors, as, under the treaty, the latter had a perfect right to do. In order to prevent this the Poles built transit warehouses for their army stores on a site granted by the harbor board near the edge of the town. The Danzigers protested, and with justification, that the presence of great stores of high explosives so near the city constituted a standing menace to the community, which the Poles denied. While the controversy was at its

## THE RESURRECTED LAND

height another Polish ammunition dump, at Cracow, blew up, causing a large loss of life and incidentally wrecking the Polish arguments in regard to the depot at Danzig.

The Poles and the free citizens have quarreled over such trivial matters as the control of Danzig's telephone system, the official language and flag used by the harbor board, forms of correspondence relating to foreign affairs, the building of a ferry on the Hulm, whether place-names should be in Polish or German, and the establishment of a Polish tourist bureau in the Danzig railway station. I mention these disputes, most of them quite unimportant in themselves, to show how the Poles and Germans irritate each other by constant pin-prickings. The truth is that the Danzig burghers are as stoutly insistent on maintaining their city's rights and privileges as they were in the days of the Hanseatic League, being encouraged in their intransigent attitude by their fellow-Teutons across the German border, while the Poles for their part remain sullen and resentful because the allies did not hand Danzig over to them, lock, stock and barrel. It is to be hoped, however, that the situation will be materially improved by the completion of the Polish port at Gdynia and the loss of parliamentary control by the ultra-nationalist faction.

The president of the Danzig Senate, and, consequently, the chief executive of the free city, is Dr. Sahm, an astute and level-headed statesman of



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exceptional ability, who has the unenviable job of sitting on the safety-valve of German nationalism. He is, he boasts laughingly, the most commanding figure in European politics, for he stands seven feet four in his stockings. As we sat chatting in his office in the Stadthaus, with the dim old portraits of long-dead burgomasters in ruffs and doublets looking down at us, it struck me that the man opposite me had a more trying task than ever fell to the lot of any of his predecessors in the days of the city's Hanseatic power.

"Were the Danzigers given their choice," I asked him, "would they vote to remain citizens of the free city, provided it were a really free city, with no strings attached to its independence, or would they go back to Germany?"

"That is not a question that I can answer with propriety," he replied, "because, though I am a German, I am also president of Danzig."

But I can guess what his answer would have been.

The usual route from Danzig to East Prussia is via Dirschau, but this involves cutting across a small corner of Polish territory and the vexations incident to crossing two frontiers. In order to avoid this the Danzigers have established a motor-bus service which follows a roundabout route through the territory of the free city to Marienburg, which is an East Prussian town. I had intended to follow this route but lost my way amid a network of rivers, creeks, and canals, having to ferry the car over a



## THE RESURRECTED LAND

whole series of waterways before gaining the German border. It is a curious circumstance that, though when our journey ended we had traversed twenty-five countries and traveled twelve thousand miles, the only occasion when our luggage was examined during the entire trip was upon leaving the free city of Danzig. I realize the necessity for customs examinations upon entering a country, but it passes my comprehension why such examinations are required upon leaving one.

Our run across East Prussia will always be a pleasant memory because of the universal excellence of the roads, so smooth and level that I was able to maintain an average speed of fifty miles an hour. The German province of East Prussia is about the size of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island combined, with half their population. A flat and highly fertile land, agriculturally it is enormously rich and apparently prosperous. Nowhere in Europe did we see better farms, the Prussian farmer being years ahead of all other continental peoples in the employment of modern machinery and the adoption of scientific methods. I had been told in Berlin that as the result of being cut off from the Reich the province was being strangled economically, but it certainly does not look like a country which is dying from strangulation. The factory chimneys were smoking, the shops were filled, the farmsteads were well kept, the roads as a whole were far better than those in the western

## EMBATTLED BORDERS

province of Germany, and there were observable no signs of unemployment. I have no doubt, however, that the province is feeling the effects of the long-drawn-out commercial war between Germany and Poland, for the latter is normally East Prussia's best customer. This trade war is a senseless affair, which increases hard feeling and threatens hard times without giving Germany any corresponding advantage. The sooner it is brought to an end by the conclusion of a German-Polish commercial treaty the better it will be for all concerned.

In considering the situation of East Prussia it should be borne in mind that this is not the first time that the province has been an enclave, for the western part of the duchy of Prussia was severed from the eastern half and assigned to Poland in 1466, the two not being reunited until the first partition of Poland in 1772. There is in East Prussia, as might be expected, a considerable number of inhabitants who are Poles in race and speech but are Lutheran in religion. A very large group of this sort is found in the Allenstein district, in the southern part of East Prussia, yet when they were given an opportunity by plebiscite to decide whether they preferred German or Polish rule, the Allensteiners voted to remain with the Reich.

It is not at all surprising that both the Poles and the Germans should wish to place their opposing points of view before the world in the rosier colors possible, but I wish that in doing this they would





The crack cavalry of the country are the lancers, hard riders and dashing horsemen



But the backbone of the army is the less showy but well-equipped infantry

ESTONIA'S SHIELD AGAINST BOLSHEVISM

## THE RESURRECTED LAND

show greater respect for the truth. The fallaciousness of some of their statements is apparent only to students of history; the absurdity of others must be apparent to school children. When I was leaving Warsaw the Polish Foreign Office sent me an enormous bundle of propagandist literature, and when I was leaving Danzig the Germans did the same thing. These booklets, brochures, pamphlets, maps, and charts are interesting if for no other reason than because they show the lengths to which polite invective and courteous contumely can be carried, and because they illustrate the fashion in which statistics are juggled and history perverted in order to make out a case, but as arguments intended to appeal to thinking men they are not worth the paper they are printed on. Personally—and I have said this to more than one European foreign minister—I believe that the vast sums spent on this sort of propaganda are thrown away, for the publications are in nearly all cases too one-sided to be convincing and are, consequently, usually consigned to the waste-basket.

Night was falling when we entered Tilsit, the quiet old town beside the Niemen which is Germany's farthestmost outpost on the east. Though Tilsit has no buildings of historical importance, to me the place was filled with interest, for here, in 1807, on a raft moored in the river—perhaps because they did not dare trust themselves ashore!—the Emperors Napoleon and Alexander agreed to divide



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Prussia as a couple of hungry boys might divide a stolen pie. And a hundred and twelve years later, at Versailles, Prussia was subjected to a second partition. From a purely historical point of view it would seem that Germany has suffered quite as much from French imperialism as France has from German imperialism. It might be pointed out, furthermore, that Germany eventually recovered the territories taken from her by Alexander and Napoleon. And history has a curious way of repeating itself.

The Niemen, which is spanned at Tilsit by a long iron bridge, the arms of imperial Germany over one end and those of imperial Russia over the other, now forms the frontier between East Prussia and Lithuania. I crossed that bridge with considerable anxiety, for the Lithuanian Government, like that of Yugoslavia, does not recognize international motor-car triptychs and the Lithuanian frontier officials have the reputation of being suspicious and stubborn.

I recalled with misgivings the experience of a motorist who had sought to cross that same bridge some weeks before. He was duly checked out by the German passport authorities, but the frontier officials on the other side, asserting that his papers were not in order, refused to let him enter Lithuania. He was compelled, perforce, to return to the other end of the bridge, but the German officials refused to let him reënter the Reich until he had his passport viséd by a German consul in Lithuania. He

## THE RESURRECTED LAND

hastened back to the Lithuanian side to explain his predicament, but the Lithuanians were adamant in their refusal to permit him to enter their territory. Incredible as it may sound to one who has had no experience with frontier authorities in eastern Europe, that unfortunate traveler spent the entire day crossing and recrossing the bridge, being buffeted from Germany to Lithuania and from Lithuania to Germany like a human ping-pong ball. He would be there still, no doubt, had he not succeeded in persuading the Germans to telegraph the Foreign Office in Berlin, whereupon orders came permitting him to be released from his confinement on the bridge.

So I heaved a sigh of genuine relief when the officer in command of the Lithuanian frontier guard, upon learning my name, produced a telegram which he had received from Kovno instructing him to let us enter the country without hindrance, and saluted smartly as we rolled past him into the first of the chain of made-to-order states which bar Red Russia from the Baltic.

## CHAPTER IX

### BARRIERS AGAINST BOLSHEVISM

**W**HEN the treaty-makers realized the necessity of making the world safe against bolshevism as well as against Teutonic militarism, and of preventing these two sinister forces from joining hands, they sought to achieve their ends by raising a barrier between Russia and the Baltic and between Russia and the Reich. This barrier took the form of three small republics—Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia—which were carved from the Baltic seaboard of the soviet dominions. We are thus presented with the extraordinary spectacle of a trio of insignificant states, their total population scarcely exceeding that of Greater New York and their total area considerably less than that of New York and New England, planted athwart the western gateway of an empire whose flag flies over nearly 150 millions of people and whose borders enclose one eighth of the land-surface of the globe. Further comment on the strength of the barrier seems unnecessary.

The three Baltic states are traversed by the great military highroad, the Petrograd Chaussée, five

## BARRIERS AGAINST BOLSHEVISM

hundred miles in length and almost as straight as though it had been laid out with a ruler, which runs from the Niemen to the Neva. Paved with the round cobble-stones which the French call *têtes-du-chat*, it is rough in spots but it is passable in all weathers.

Shavli, the first place of importance in Lithuania, looks like a cross between a Texas oil town and a Nevada mining camp. The streets, extremely broad as is the Russian fashion, and laid with stones the size of a man's head, are too rough even for the peasants' stoutly built farm wagons, which in the soft soil on either side have made wide deeply rutted trails of their own. In summer a passing vehicle raises suffocating clouds of yellow dust; during the rainy months it slips and slithers through a quagmire of inky ooze. The buildings in the business section of the town are one- and two-story affairs of brick or stucco; the dwellings are for the most part wretched hovels of unpainted wood, though the fronts of the more pretentious ones have been plastered, whitewashed, and decorated with fantastic designs in vivid colors. There had been no attempt at sanitation when we were there, and the place reeked with the stench of open drains, decaying garbage, unkempt cattle, sweat-soaked leather, unwashed human bodies, garlic, and manure. And there was a noticeable absence of law and order, the broad market-square being a chaos of ramshackle farm wagons, hucksters' booths, fly-tormented cattle, herds of sheep, droves of swine, and a milling mob of



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drovers, farmers, and buyers. Judged by any standards you please, Shavli is a rough town.

Here our first serious difficulties in regard to money began, for the local bank declined to cash the express checks which I carried and viewed my letter of credit with suspicion. Polish zloty were refused everywhere, so were Danzig gulden, and the marks which I had brought from Germany were accepted reluctantly and only at an enormous discount. I was careful, however, not to load up with the local currency, for I knew that when I crossed the Latvian frontier, a fewscore miles farther on, any Lithuanian lits which I might have left would be virtually worthless, and that the lat, which is the monetary unit of Latvia, would not be accepted in Estonia. Before leaving Danzig, however, I had followed the advice of the American consul and had provided myself with a supply of American greenbacks. These now stood me in good stead and, in fact, solved the financial problem throughout the Baltic states, for all the way from Lithuania to Finland they were accepted without question and in some places commanded a considerable premium.

The Lithuanians are essentially a peasant people—illiterate, superstitious, stolid, tolerably honest, hard-working, rough in manner, and inclined to be quarrelsome. Until very recent years they have not been proprietors of the soil they tilled. They have given a few families to the Russian and Polish nobility, but the great mass of the people became serfs



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of foreign landowners, Polish and German, who reduced them to the greatest misery, which accounts for the large numbers which have emigrated to other countries, particularly to the United States. Inhabiting a country which is largely marsh and forest, knowing little save oppression, taxation, and privation, the Lithuanians have managed to maintain their national character notwithstanding the vicissitudes of their history.

Though as a people they wish independence and fiercely hate the Poles, many of the inhabitants of the border districts do not know and do not care to what nationality they belong. For generations Lithuanian, Polish, and Russian peasants have lived side by side and for generations they have been exploited by Lithuanian, Polish, and Russian landlords, so that they have come to hate all landlords indiscriminately. The truth is that the peasants of Lithuania, like their fellows throughout eastern Europe, have little real interest either in national independence or cultural development. The name of their country, the color of their flag, the design on their postage-stamps—these are questions about which they do not greatly bother themselves so long as they have steady work, good wages, and plenty to eat.

In numbers the Lithuanians, at home and abroad, do not exceed three millions. Of their origin little is known, and about the time of their appearance in the country which they now inhabit nothing. As

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early as the twelfth century, however, they succeeded in forming an independent state and maintained their independence against the encroachments of their powerful neighbors for four hundred years. In 1385 a Lithuanian prince, Jagiello, by marrying the Polish queen, Yadviga, became King of Poland, the union of the two countries thus being a personal one. At this period, Lithuania's golden age, the country was a vast empire, stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea, from the Niemen to the Moskva. From the union with Poland the history of Lithuania becomes merged in Poland's history, Lithuanians and White Russians sharing the fate of the Polish kingdom. From having been the largest state in Europe it has dwindled to the insignificant republic of to-day, which is about the size of Georgia, with somewhat less than Georgia's population.

Vilna, one of the largest and most important cities of western Russia in czarist days, had been the capital of mediæval Lithuania, so when, in 1919, the Supreme Council at Paris delimited a frontier between Poland and Lithuania, it was quite natural that the city and province of Vilna should be assigned to the latter country. Though the population of the district is overwhelmingly Lithuanian, the Poles bitterly resented the decision on the ground that, after the union of the two countries in the Middle Ages, Vilna had become a center of Polish culture. After the Bolsheviki had been driven back from Warsaw in 1920, however, the Poles and Lithu-



They look as though they were ready for a fancy dress party, or as if they had stepped out of an operatic chorus, but this is the fashion in which the inhabitants of the islands off Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, customarily dress, at least on Sundays and holidays

THESE CLOTHES DIDN'T COME FROM A THEATRICAL COSTUMER



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anians, between whose forces numerous clashes had occurred, signed an armistice, under the terms of which Vilna was to remain in Lithuanian hands. But two days later General Zeligovski, the Polish filibuster, of whom I have spoken in the preceding chapter, taking d'Annunzio's seizure of Fiume for a pattern, suddenly attacked Vilna with a force of volunteers, drove out the Lithuanian garrison, and proclaimed the city and province part of Poland.

This act of brigandage was nominally disavowed by the Government at Warsaw, and the League of Nations sought to settle the dispute by recourse to a plebiscite—always a safe course to adopt, for it postpones the necessity of making a definite decision, and unless the plebiscite is satisfactory to the League, that body pays no attention to it anyway, as was demonstrated in the case of Upper Silesia. In the Vilna dispute feeling ran so high, however, that the League finally abandoned the case in despair and withdrew its commissioners. The following year, at the insistence of Poland's ally, France, the Council of Ambassadors gave its official approval to the spoliation by assigning the whole district seized by Zeligovski, including the populous cities of Vilna, Grodno, and Suwalki, to Poland. Lithuania refused to accept this decision but failed to obtain any satisfaction either from the allies or the League of Nations, both of which found it inexpedient to offend Poland.

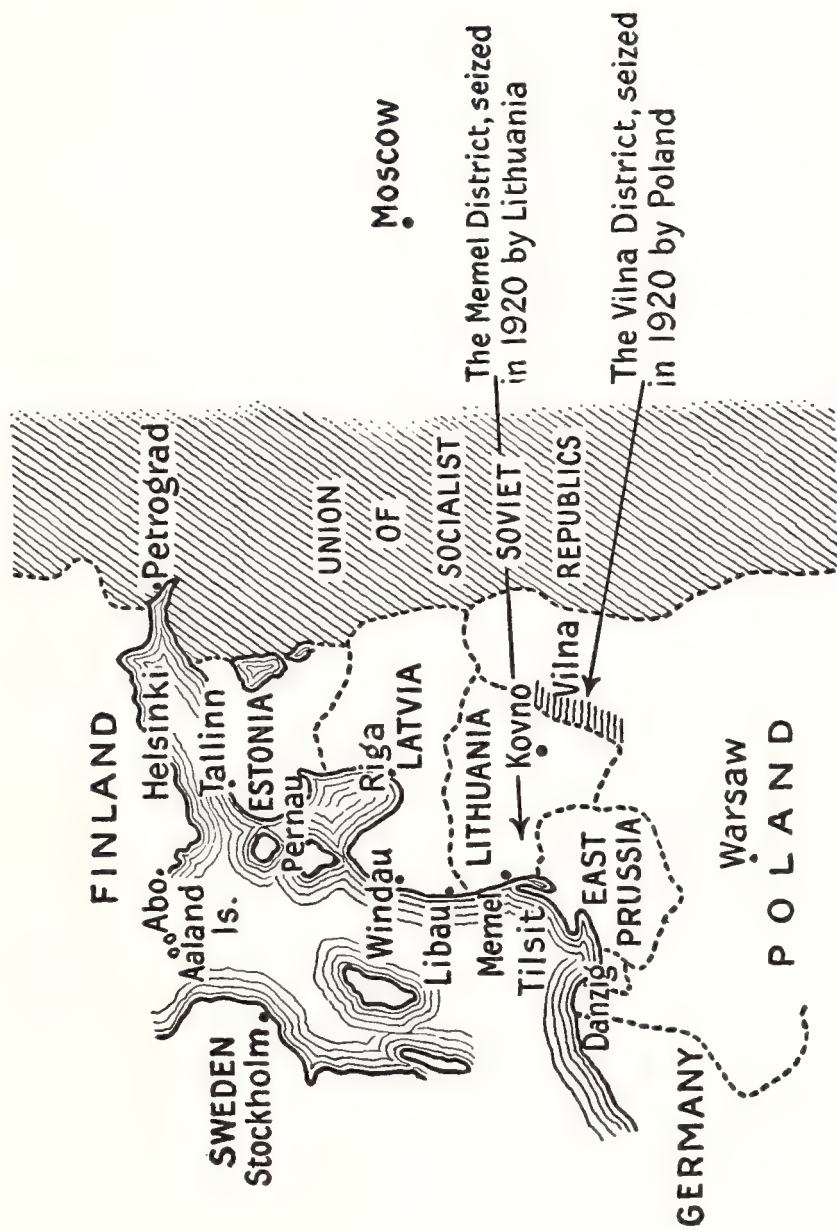
But the Lithuanians had at hand a means to par-



## EMBATTLED BORDERS

tially even up the score. The territory of Memel, consisting of the Baltic seaport of that name and a narrow edge of hinterland along the Niemen, had, by the treaty of Versailles, been detached from Germany, placed under the jurisdiction of the League of Nations, and occupied by a French garrison. In January, 1923, the Lithuanians, imitating the conduct of the Poles at Vilna, took the city by a surprise attack, forcing the French troops to surrender and evacuate. The allies and the League of Nations, confronted by a *fait accompli* identical with that to which they had acquiesced in the case of Vilna, were forced to accept the humiliation and make the best of the situation by recognizing Lithuania's sovereignty over Memel. Though Lithuania has lost her ancient capital, together with one of her richest provinces, she has recouped herself at least in part by obtaining a maritime outlet of vital importance and one which the Poles had confidently expected would be given to themselves. Justice, outraged in Vilna and Upper Silesia, must have permitted herself a fleeting smile of satisfaction when the yellow-red-and-green standard was hoisted over Memel.

Upon the Polish seizure of Vilna, the Lithuanian Government fled to Kovno, which the Lithuanians persist in regarding, however, merely as their capital *pro tem*. A cramped and exceedingly unhealthful town of mean streets and wretched wooden houses, with indifferent sanitation, without a safe water supply, decent hotels, or places of amusement, in-



THE BARRIER BETWEEN BOLSHEVISM AND THE BALTIC



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deed with few comforts of any kind, Kovno is not a pleasant place of abode for the Lithuanian legislators or for the foreign ministers and consuls who have the misfortune to be stationed there. Meanwhile the Lithuanian diplomatic and consular officials in Poland have been withdrawn and, *vice versa*, the frontier remains closed, the railway has been torn up, direct postal and telegraphic communications between the two countries have ceased, Lithuania refuses to permit Polish timber to be floated down the Niemen to the Baltic, and heavy forces of Polish and Lithuanian troops glare belligerently at each other across barriers of barbed wire.

The situation thus created is as full of potential trouble as a can of nitroglycerin. The passions of the disputants, particularly the despoiled Lithuanians, are running dangerously high, and at any moment something may happen which will set the whole of northeastern Europe aflame. By herself, of course, Lithuania is quite helpless against her powerful neighbor, but a nation which feels that it has been ill-treated, like an individual, will sometimes go to extremes to obtain revenge. If, for example, the Lithuanians, while retaining their autonomy, were to effect some sort of a union with Russia—and Russia has much to offer—bolshevism could sweep down to the Baltic, cut the *cordon sanitaire* in the middle, and join hands with Germany. Mind you, I do not mean to suggest that the Lithuanian leaders are actually contemplating any such step, but I

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do know that they have given it serious consideration.

The president of Lithuania is M. Smetona, but the man whom the Poles most fear is the premier, Professor Valdemaras, who is also the virtual dictator of the country. Both men were put in office as the result of a *coup d'état* carried out by a clique of army officers in 1926. Valdemaras, who is unflinching in his determination not to recognize Polish sovereignty over Vilna, is faced by grave difficulties both abroad and at home, for discontented elements, alleged to have been organized and armed by the Poles, have made repeated attempts to overthrow his government. That he is as resourceful as he is ruthless was shown in November, 1927, when a group of disloyal army officers presented him with an ultimatum. He suggested that they come to his house to discuss the situation, and when they accepted the invitation the crafty dictator plied them with liquor until they were in a stupor. Then he called in his soldiers and had the befuddled conspirators carted off to prison.

Rather tardily, the government at Warsaw has come to recognize the extreme gravity of the situation which has developed from the Vilna aggression and is making assiduous efforts to secure a resumption of normal relations. Its perturbation is scarcely surprising, for foreign investors do not look with favor on the securities of countries which are continually quarreling with their neighbors, and the



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closing of the Lithuanian markets to Polish goods entails a commercial loss which Poland can ill afford. On the other hand, the Lithuanian Government is convinced that Poland is secretly preparing to launch another *Putsch* against Lithuania when the moment is deemed propitious, with the object of establishing a government friendly to Warsaw or even of annexing the whole of the little republic. A highly significant intimation of the consequences of such a mad adventure was given to the world in November, 1927, when the Russian Government informed Warsaw, in the suave phraseology of which M. Chicherin, the soviet foreign minister, is a master, that Moscow could not regard with equanimity any measures directed against Lithuanian independence. Of course this may be mere Bolshevist bluff, as the pro-Polish press asserts, but I am inclined to think that if Poland forces a war on Lithuania she will also have to reckon with Russia.

Despite the fact that a section of the Polish press contemptuously refers to the Lithuanians as uncouth savages, which is utterly unjustified, and asserts that at state balls in Kovno the president and his ministers are accustomed to doff their coats and dance in their shirt-sleeves, which is a malicious exaggeration; despite the virtual state of war which exists between the two countries and the recriminations and insults which appear almost daily in the newspapers of both, I am myself of the opinion that Poland and Lithuania may eventually compose their

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differences and effect some sort of a union, possibly of a political nature but more probably a commercial one. Such an arrangement would be of immense mutual advantage, for Poland would obtain a far better and safer outlet to the sea than the one she now possesses, while Lithuania would obtain improved communications and a much-needed market for her products. The economic union between Belgium and Luxemburg, which did away with the customs barrier between the two countries and established a common currency, might serve as a model for Poland and Lithuania. No union, be it economic or political, could be realized, however, unless Poland could satisfy the Lithuanians that she had no designs on their independence. That done, and an era of good feeling established, a complete amalgamation of the two countries might follow. It may be assumed, however, that the Germans will do their utmost to prevent such a union, for it would mean the encirclement of East Prussia by Polish territory.

Leaving Lithuania was not as simple a matter as entering it, for, though I had taken the precaution of providing myself with every credential which a long experience in restless regions could suggest, we were detained for nearly two hours at the border while the suspicious frontier officials telephoned our names, descriptions, and the numbers of our passports to Kovno. It struck me as significant that, while we kicked our heels impatiently, a party of





THE CATHEDRAL OF TALLINN

"The moonlight crept and glistened silent, solemn, sweet,  
Over dome and column, up empty, endless street . . ."

## BARRIERS AGAINST BOLSHEVISM

Bolshevist motor-cyclists—the most villainous looking trio I have ever seen outside the walls of a prison—who were returning to Moscow after a tour of Europe, the red flags of the U.S.S.R. fluttering from their handle-bars, were greeted with the utmost cordiality, their passports stamped with a minimum of delay, and waved across the border with every sign of good-will.

Crossing from Lithuania into Latvia is like crossing from Mexico into the United States. On one side of the border are poverty, backwardness, disorganization, gloom, and discontent; on the other, energy, order, progress, cheerfulness, and signs of dawning prosperity. That this should be so is the more remarkable when it is remembered that Latvia suffered more than any of the other Baltic countries during the World War, having lost nearly 40 per cent. of her population by compulsory emigration to Russia in consequence of the German invasion. Of the refugee population, which numbered close to a million, hardly 300,000 have returned, the greater part of the missing having perished. Almost all the industries and the industrial population were evacuated to Russia upon the approach of the German armies; ten thousand farms were utterly destroyed by the invaders. The machinery and equipment of industries employing over 100,000 factory hands were sent to Russia in twenty thousand railway trucks, of which the Bolsheviks have restored only two hundred. In Courland, when the German occu-



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pation ended, over half of the farms had been destroyed or stood empty. Notwithstanding this discouraging handicap, the statistics show that during 1927 both the cultivated areas and the harvests greatly exceeded the best pre-war year. The factories are being started up again as fast as they can be rebuilt, though in this respect, owing to financial reasons, progress has not been so rapid; the old roads are being resurfaced and new ones are under construction; the country is on its feet economically; its finances are being very ably handled; its peasantry gives every indication of being contented; and it is on excellent terms with its neighbors, including Russia. Indeed, I know of no other post-war state, unless it be Finland, of which as much can be said.

Latvia consists of the whole of the former Russian provinces of Courland and parts of the former Russian provinces of Livonia and Vitebsk, its area being about the same as that of West Virginia. The capital of the republic is Riga, with a population of nearly 350,000; in addition to which there are two other important harbors: Liepaja (Libau), and Ventspils (Windau), all three being rail outlets for a large part of inland Russia. The chief basis of Latvian life is agriculture, which furnishes employment for more than half the population.

Until well into the present century the landed proprietors, the so-called Baltic barons, most of whom were Germans, retained possession of the land and

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enjoyed innumerable feudal privileges, such as shooting and fishing rights and the sole right to establish industrial enterprises. The Agrarian Law of 1920 put an end to this pernicious system, however, the expropriated land being allotted to the peasants, so that to-day every man who wishes may have a farm of his own. While it is undeniable that the German proprietors exploited the peasants shamefully, credit must be given them for the introduction of modern agricultural machinery and scientific methods of farming. Under the Agrarian Law the landlords were left in possession of a certain portion of their estates, not larger than 125 acres, with live stock and equipment, the law limiting the new farms to twenty-two hectares, or about fifty-five acres. In this way the number of small farms has been increased to over 200,000 and the new state has been placed on a firm social basis. I visited a number of these peasant holdings and was most favorably impressed by the efficiency with which they are being worked and the comfortable and substantial dwellings which have been erected on them.

Owing to its geographical situation, Latvia occupies a position of great commercial and political importance. A glance at the map will show the reason why, for Latvia is Russia's window on the west, her gateway to the Baltic. Riga, which since the war has become the most important seaport on the southern shore of the Baltic, is 365 miles southwest of Petrograd and 500 miles due west of Moscow. Three main

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Russian railway systems converge on Latvian ports: the great trunk line from Smolensk to Riga; the railway from Moscow to Windau, and the line which connects the rich industrial region of Poltava with Libau. And here is a very important point. To facilitate the transit of goods from Russia to the coast the Latvian lines are of Russian gage, though normal gage is employed on the line leading through Lithuania to western Europe, the route of the famous Nord Express. As a result, Latvia enjoys the enormous advantage of being the sole country through which Russian goods can pass without transshipment.

Of all the border states Latvia stands to benefit the most by maintaining good relations with Russia, and that fact her leaders have never lost sight of for an instant. This trend is indicated by the much-discussed trade treaty recently negotiated with the Soviet Government by M. Felix Cielens, the Latvian minister of foreign affairs, which promises to result in an enormous increase in Latvian trade, making that small country in effect the commercial intermediary between Russia and the outside world.

Though still comparatively little known outside the Baltic states, M. Cielens is one of the ablest statesmen whom Europe has produced since the war. Still in his thirties, highly educated, master of half a dozen languages, the recognized leader of the Social Democratic party, holding the confidence of





THE WAY TO THE NORTH

In Estonia. The road from Riga to Tallinn—and it is quite a good road on the whole—winds across a country-side of fields, farmsteads, and woodlands like a lariat tossed carelessly upon the ground



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both peasants and industrialists, and thoroughly conversant with his country's social, commercial, and political problems, he has displayed a sound common sense and a breadth of vision which have made him the dominating figure in Baltic politics. In giving consideration to his views it should be kept in mind that Latvia, while opposed to bolshevism, is a socialistic state.

Standing before a wall-map in his ministry in Riga, the youthful statesman outlined his plans for an eastern Locarno pact which, if it can be realized, will guarantee the *status quo* on the eastern shores of the Baltic. The treaty which he proposes would include Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and possibly Lithuania on one side, Germany and Russia on the other.

"If economic rivalries, political jealousies, and competitions in armaments continue," he said, "nothing is more certain than that within the next decade or so another great European conflict will be precipitated. It is to guard against such a catastrophe by insuring political stability along the southern side of the Baltic that I am advocating this treaty.

"It is all nonsense," he continued, "to assert that Russia is preparing to launch another war of aggression. Whether you approve of their policies or not, you must admit that the soviet leaders are shrewd, able, and far-seeing men, and they have come to a full realization that any such adventure, even were

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it successful militarily, might end in political disaster for themselves. The victories of the French revolutionary army in the end brought about the defeat of the revolutionists, and history is apt to repeat itself. Moreover, those who are directing the policies of bolshevism do not dare to risk a foreign war, even if they wanted one, for the Red army is not properly equipped, the finances of the country could not stand the strain, and a defeat in the field would almost certainly result in the overthrow of the Bolshevik régime.

“The interests of Russia, Germany, and the Baltic states do not seriously conflict—in fact, in many respects they are identical—and there is no reason why they cannot dwell in amity. With these six Governments, representing more than 200 millions of people, or more than half the total population of Europe, united by some agreement resembling the Locarno pact, mutual distrust would be allayed, the signatories would be able to realize their legitimate aspirations without arousing suspicion as to their motives, and Europe would be freed from the nightmare of warlike complications in one of the danger-spots of the Continent.”

Signs are not lacking that certain of the European powers, notably France and Poland, may oppose such a pact as M. Cielens proposes, for they look with suspicion on any move which might strengthen Germany or Russia. England, on the other hand, notwithstanding her present strained relations with the

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soviets, would presumably welcome any arrangement which would make for peace and stability on the southern shores of the Baltic.

The command of the Baltic has been for centuries a bone of contention between the states of north-eastern Europe. For it Teutons, Poles, Lithuanians, Swedes, Danes, Russians strove in turn. To give it again to one of the coastwise states would mean a fresh menace to European peace; but by putting it in the hands of those to whom it belongs by natural right, that is to say, into the common possession of the states surrounding that sea, would be to remove one of the causes of future conflict in Europe.

I might remark in this connection that, as the result of numerous conversations with Baltic statesmen, I obtained the impression that, should Russia eventually achieve a decent, stable, and liberal government, the Baltic states, with the possible exception of Finland, would not be wholly averse to a reunion, always provided, of course, they were guaranteed a large measure of autonomy. All of the persons with whom I talked during my stay in the Baltic countries expressed the conviction that Russia will eventually stage a come-back, just as France came back after the French Revolution and again after the Commune, and that when she does her vast wealth and enormous population will give her a place of immense importance in the community of nations.

Ever since the war Riga has been Europe's most important listening-post on the east. Three fourths

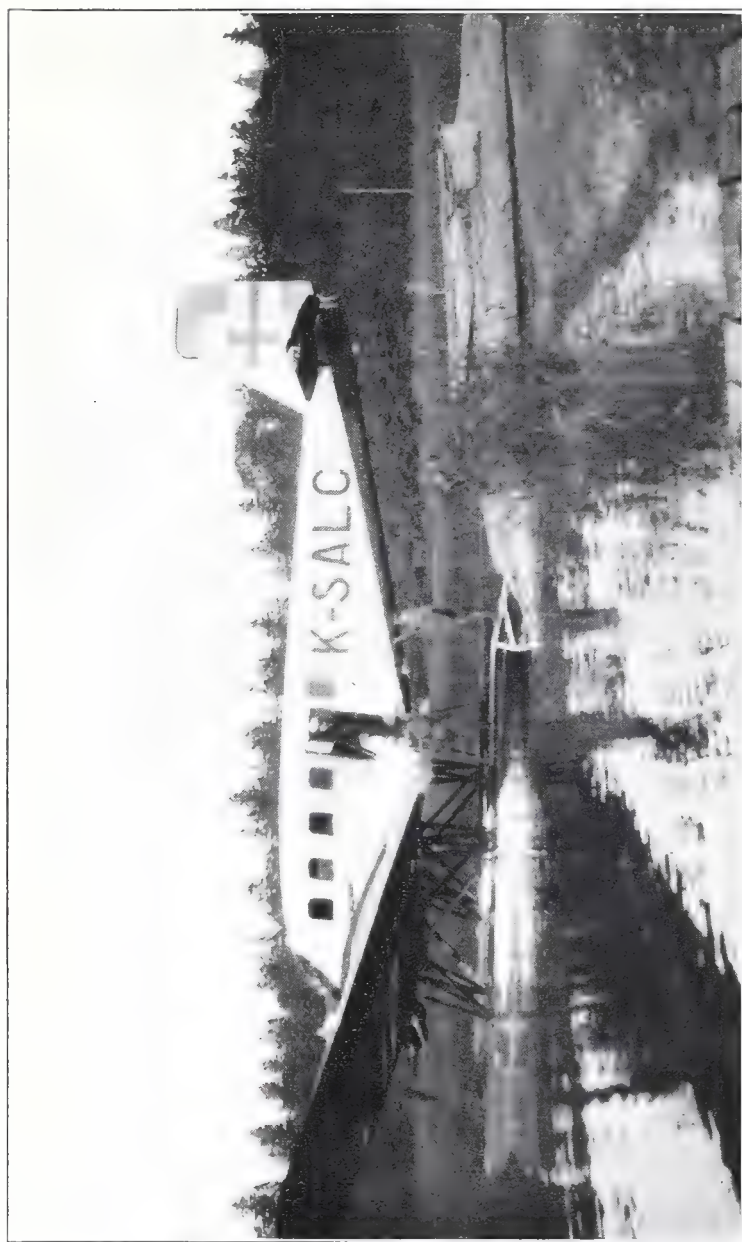
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of the despatches on Russian affairs published in the American and European press bear the Riga date-line. From here are directed the elaborate espionage services which certain of the powers maintain within the Russian borders, and from the Latvian capital emanates a flood of truths, half truths, rumors, exaggerations, speculations, and fabrications regarding conditions and events within the confines of the vast mysterious land.

It is generally admitted that the best organized and perhaps the most efficient of these intelligence services is the British, though of its actual workings next to nothing is known. It is very doubtful, however, whether the British Foreign Office keeps many, if any, English secret agents in Russia, depending rather on emissaries whose nationality is less open to suspicion—Finnish, Estonian, and Latvian commercial travelers, Jewish traders, Russians who remain secretly loyal to the old régime, and venal Bolsheviks who are willing to take the risks involved in selling information for a price. So far as I am aware, there has been only one authenticated case of an Englishman being executed by the Bolsheviks for spying, and him Downing Street emphatically disowned. But when the British Government asserts, as it does periodically, that it maintains no espionage service in Russia, the diplomats in Riga and Tallinn merely shrug their shoulders and smile knowingly.

I imagine that it will come as a surprise to most Americans—and perhaps cause considerable pertur-





LIKE A SILVER SEA-BIRD SETTLING ON THE MARSHES

One of the Junker all-metal planes used on the air-lines between Tallinn, Helsingfors, and Stockholm stopping at Abo in Finland to take on passengers





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bation to Senator Borah—to learn that the United States is not greatly behind the European powers in regard to obtaining Russian information, these activities being under the very able direction of Mr. Frederick W. B. Coleman, the American minister to the Baltic states, who, it is generally understood, has at his disposal a contingent fund for which he is required to make no public accounting. The United States, it should be explained, is not particularly interested in Russia's military preparations, save in a general way, but the Government at Washington deems it necessary to keep its fingers on the pulse of public opinion within the pale of bolshevism, to be conversant with the real economic situation in the country, and to ascertain the methods by which the Red leaders succeed in financing their administration.

An amusing illustration of the extent to which Mr. Coleman is informed of what happens in Russia occurred not long ago, when an American newspaper writer, a woman, returning from Moscow, called at the Riga legation.

“Well, Mr. Minister,” she said importantly, “what would you like to have me tell you about Russia?”

“But what can you tell me, madam?” inquired the courtly diplomat. “During your stay in Russia, if my information is correct, you saw little save the inside of a prison.”

The truth is that most of the “information”

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brought out of Russia by returning visitors is in reality misinformation. Those to whom the Bolshevik authorities grant passports—particularly in the case of Americans and English—are generally pledged in advance to give no interviews and to write no books or articles in criticism of the Bolshevik administration. Immediately upon their arrival in Moscow or Petrograd—it is wise to call the latter city Leningrad if you are applying for a passport—they are assigned a guide, or rather a watcher, whose duty it is never to let them out of his sight and to listen in on all their conversations. To make assurance doubly sure, both the visitors and their guides are kept under ceaseless surveillance by the secret agents of the Cheka. For the purpose of favorably impressing foreign visitors the Bolshevik Government has thoughtfully provided a whole series of model institutions—schools, prisons, insane asylums, tenement-houses, farms—through which the visitor is conducted as though he were being shown around an exhibition, so that when he leaves the country he is more likely than not to give a glowing account of what he has seen. It may be said in defense of those who return from Russia and speak admiringly of bolshevism's achievements that they are telling the truth about what they have seen—but they are not permitted to see anything unpleasant. The officials and diplomats in the Baltic states, who are in a position to know whereof they speak, are unanimous in asserting that the reports of conditions in Russia

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as made by returned visitors are virtually worthless, save in those extremely rare cases where they succeeded in evading the vigilance of the Cheka and were able to mingle with the people and talk with them in Russian.

Notwithstanding Riga's proximity to the Russian border, it is neither a picturesque nor a particularly interesting town. There are two or three fine churches, dating from Hanseatic times; a massive castle built in the fifteenth century by the grand master of the Knights of the Sword; and a curious building known as the House of the Black Heads. The name, incidentally, does not refer to blemishes of the epidermis, but is derived from the busts of Saracens which adorn the façade of the building. In the heart of the city is a fine park, with lagoons on which one may go a-rowing and shady promenades; in the new section the streets are exceptionally wide and lined with modern and unimaginative apartment-houses. Riga has a wintry sound, and one instinctively thinks of the place in terms of snow and Russian sledges, but a hot spell set in while we were there and for a week we suffered from such oppressive heat as I have never known outside of Equatoria.

In summer every one who can get away moves out to the Strand, a convenient seaside resort on the Baltic. Here, set amid groves of fragrant pines, are numerous comfortable but unpretentious villas, several large casinos and dance-halls, and a splen-

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did beach of hard white sand on which the great combers from the Baltic break in foam and thunder.

Until eleven o'clock in the morning the beach is reserved for women, who generally go in bathing without any clothing whatsoever. During this period the masculine element is supposed to keep at a respectful distance, but on Sunday mornings, when the beach is crowded with feminine bathers disporting themselves in the nude, the line of sand dunes immediately behind it provide favorite observation-posts for gentlemen armed with telescopes, binoculars, and opera-glasses. From eleven o'clock onward men and women bathe together, and then the women make a half-hearted effort to veil their charms.

I recall one extremely pretty girl, bathing a few yards from me, who had compromised with modesty by donning an extremely abbreviated and diaphanous chemise of silk and lace. The garment was daring enough when dry, but when soaked with water it clung so tightly to her lovely figure that she might as well have had nothing on.

M. Cielens, the Latvian foreign minister, gave a dinner for us one evening at his villa on the Strand and afterward took us over to the casino for dancing. We arrived at an interesting moment, the jazz band of American negroes being engaged in a heated controversy with the management because their pay was some weeks in arrears. The manager





Set on a lofty crag known as the Domberg, is the Dom, or castle, built in the 13th century and now the seat of the Esthonian Government



The city wall, broken by numerous circular towers, was erected in the 14th century, when Tallinn was an important member of the Hanseatic League

#### BULWARKS OF THE BALTIC BARONS



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ordered them to pack up their instruments and leave the stage, but they refused on the plea that by doing so they would break their contract, whereupon he brought in a Lettish military band and set it playing in the gallery. Then ensued one of the most screamingly funny scenes I have ever witnessed, for the negroes and the Latvians played at the same time, each trying to drown out the other. If you can imagine a dozen perspiring darkies playing "Dixie" and twice that number of military bandsmen pounding out the Latvian March, and several hundred mirth-convulsed spectators stamping and shouting and jeering and laughing, you will have some idea of the pandemonium that ensued. The tumult only came to an end when the manager appeared with a force of gendarmes and attempted to remove the negroes by force, whereupon our host, who is the best known figure in Latvia, stood up and shouted above the din, "Those men should not be put out. They have a perfect right to strike." This pronunciamento was in keeping with M. Cielens's position as the leader of the Lettish Socialist party, but I suspect that it was actuated to some extent by the fact that Mr. Coleman, the American minister, was one of the party. On the latter's advice the negroes capitulated and took their departure quietly, he promising them that he would endeavor to obtain the money due them.

"Dis hyear country may be all right fo' de Lettices," one of the Ethiopians remarked discon-

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solately as he was strapping up his saxophone, "but fo' mah paht, Ah wish to Gawd Ah was back in Bumminham again."

If, in going from Riga to Tallinn, we had kept to the main road, we probably would have had no trouble. But instead I listened to wayside advice and took a road which, I was assured, was several kilometers shorter. It was an extremely narrow road, highly crowned and slippery from recent rains, and it led through as gloomy a stretch of forest as you would find anywhere. (For utter loneliness I know of nothing to compare with the black forests along the Russian border.) It took us upward of an hour to cover half a dozen miles, for the car constantly threatened to skid into the strips of marshy swale which flanked the road on either side, so that darkness was setting in when we reached the border. Picture our dismay, then, to find that the frontier guards had gone home for the night, locking the door into Estonia behind them. A few yards ahead of us the forest ended abruptly and a good country road began, but there was no way to reach it without the use of an axe because of a stout wooden bar secured with chain and padlock. It was a lonely spot, certainly no place in which to spend the night, so there was nothing for it but to turn around—a maneuver of no little difficulty on that narrow causeway—and retrace our steps through the forest, which with the disappearance of the sun had suddenly been plunged into inky darkness, for in these northern

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lands the twilight is of brief duration. When we finally reached the frontier station on the main highway, that too was deserted, but here fortune deigned to smile upon us, for the gates had been left open and we rolled across one of the most jealously guarded frontiers in Europe without showing a paper.

I don't remember how to spell the name of the first town across the Estonian frontier and it is unpronounceable anyway. No matter. When we arrived there we were almost out of gasoline and there was no sign of a gas-pump. But upon uttering the magic word "Benzine" a rough-looking fellow detached himself from a group drinking vodka before the village inn and beckoned us to follow him. He led us through back streets and alleys to the rear door of what was evidently a warehouse, into the black depths of which he disappeared. After a brief delay he reappeared bearing several red *bidons*. When we had filled the tank I asked him how much I owed him, but he shrugged his shoulders and muttered something in Estonian. While I was endeavoring to make myself understood in German, helped out by signs, a clean-cut, fresh-complexioned young fellow sauntered up and asked me in my own tongue if he could be of any assistance.

"Are you an American?" I asked in astonishment, for it was the last place on earth where I should have expected to meet a fellow-countryman.

"Surest thing you know," he replied briskly.



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"I'm an American sailor. Mediterranean squadron. Here on leave visiting my folks."

"I'm trying to find out," I explained, "how much I owe this man for the benzine, but he won't tell me."

The sailor conversed briefly with the other in Estonian. Then he turned to me with a grin.

"This guy says," he translated, "that he stole the gasoline from the government warehouse, so he doesn't know how much it is worth. He says that anything you want to give him will be all hunkydory with him. He knows you're Americans and he doesn't want to cheat you."

I paid him the current rate for the gasoline, though I suppose that I was compounding a felony in so doing, to say nothing of being a receiver of stolen goods. But in that part of the world, under such circumstances, one doesn't bother much about that sort of thing.

We tossed up as to whether we should spend the night in the town where we were or push on to Pernau, sixty miles beyond. The coin showed heads, which meant that the town won, but after an inspection of the beds in the local inn I decided that they already had far too many occupants and accordingly flipped the coin again. This time it came tails and Pernau.

It was after midnight when we sighted the lights of the town. I had been at the wheel for nearly eighteen hours and was weary to the point of exhaustion. But, though we applied at every hotel and boarding-





A wintry aspect is given to Tallinn by the white plaster used on the roofs of the older houses



A group of houses built by rich merchants in the 15th century when the city was a member of the Hanseatic League

THE REVAL OF THE RUSSIANS, NOW WALLED TALLINN

## BARRIERS AGAINST BOLSHEVISM

house, we were unable to obtain even a bed, let alone a room, for Pernau is a popular seaside resort with the Estonians and this was the height of its short season. Then we tried the casino, the bath-house, the officers' club, and a place which I suspected of being a gambling establishment, but all without avail. The town was filled to the doors. My wife refused to let me ask for beds at the hospital and my daughter balked at my final proposal, born of desperation, that we seek a night's lodging in the jail. To add to our misery the rain was coming down in sheets. Under the circumstances there was nothing to do but appeal to the authorities, so at three o'clock in the morning I roused the prefect of police, told him my story, and displayed my credentials from the Estonian Government. He wasted no time in asking questions but reached for his telephone and rang up Tallinn, the capital, a hundred miles away. After some delay and a series of brief conversations which I could not understand he turned to me smilingly.

"Everything is arranged," he said. "I have found a place where I am sure that you will be quite comfortable. One of my men will take you there."

"But how did you arrange it?" I inquired.

"Quite simply," was the answer. "I called up the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Tallinn and told them that there were three Americans here who had no place to sleep. The ministry called up the president of the republic and he has telephoned to the caretaker of his summer villa, which he is not occupying

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at the moment, to open it and place it at your disposal. He hopes that you will forget your unfortunate introduction to Estonia and have a comfortable night. He wishes me to say that his villa is at your disposition as long as you wish to remain in Pernau."

And all this at three o'clock in the morning! I wonder if three Estonians, stranded in an American city, would be treated as hospitably.

One incident which occurred during our travels in Estonia brought home to us as nothing else could have the reversals of fortune which have been suffered by tens of thousands of Russians as a result of the revolution. We were speeding along a narrow country road when we encountered a pathetic little procession—an emaciated horse, a mere bag of bones, hauling a Russian farm wagon piled high with household belongings, a couple of cows being tethered to the tail-board of the vehicle. Striding at the horse's head was an erect fine-looking young fellow in the flat cap, dust-colored blouse, and clumsy boots of a Russian peasant, while perched on the wagon was one of the prettiest girls I have ever seen—tall, slender, willowy, blue-eyed, with a glorious complexion. My attention was drawn to her not only by her striking beauty, but because, although in peasant dress, without shoes or stockings, she had twisted a kerchief of flaming scarlet about her blonde bobbed locks, and her cheap cotton frock was gay with touches of native embroidery.



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At sight of the big car bearing down upon him the decrepit steed suddenly found new life, snorted, reared, whirled, and nearly hurled the entire equipage into the ditch, the owner quieting him only by throwing a blanket over his head. I stopped the car, of course, as any one but a road-hog would have done, and shut off the engine, but the frightened animal stubbornly refused to budge. The girl, who had scrambled to the ground, called something to me in Russian, but I explained in my halting German that I did not understand.

“But perhaps you understand English?” she said, now speaking in that language. “You are English? No? Americans? How nice! The road is too narrow for you to turn around, but I wonder if you would back your car a few yards so that we can unharness the horse and lead him past. He is an old horse and ought to know better than to behave so stupidly.”

The English of this ragged peasant girl was not only faultless in diction and pronunciation, but she spoke with the easy assurance of one who was accustomed to having her requests complied with.

Needless to say, I not only backed the car as she requested, but after the horse had been unharnessed I helped her to haul the heavy wagon past, I between the shafts and she pushing. I have already remarked that she was an extremely pretty girl.

“I’m sorry to have caused you so much trouble,” I apologized.

“And,” she replied, turning on me a dazzling

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smile, "we are sorry to have been the cause of so much inconvenience to you."

"I hope you won't think it impertinent," I said, "if I ask where you learned to speak English. One hardly expects to hear one's own language here in the wilds of Estonia."

"Oh," she said carelessly, "I had an English governess when I was a child. And at court . . ." Then she caught herself. "In St. Petersburg" (I noticed that she used the old czarist name) "nearly every one spoke English in the old days."

When the horse had been reharnessed the young peasant—I could not decide whether he was her husband or her brother—who had never spoken a word throughout the whole proceeding, drew himself up, clicked his heels together, and brought his hand to the visor of his cap in the unmistakable salute of a Russian officer. The girl climbed atop the load again and as we moved off waved merrily in farewell as though we had been old acquaintances.

A few days later, at the club in Tallinn, I mentioned the incident to the Estonian official with whom we were lunching.

"Russian refugees, of course," he commented. "Since the Bolsheviki came into power these border lands are filled with them, some of them making a scanty living by working in the fields, others unable to find work of any kind and absolutely destitute. God only knows how they manage to keep body and soul together. The man is undoubtedly a former

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czarist officer, perhaps of one of the regiments of the guard. The girl, as you describe her, may well have been one of the ladies of the imperial court. And now they probably wonder where their next meal is coming from. They are inefficient, as helpless as children, these Russian aristocrats, but you can't help admiring them because they take their misfortunes so courageously."

Estonia, the smallest of the Baltic states, boasts the longest recorded history, the Estonians claiming to have lived on their present territory as an independent nation some time before the common era. Be this as it may, it is certain that they enjoyed a free and independent life for upward of a thousand years. During this period they were a warlike and predatory race, the terror of the Baltic seamen on account of their addiction to piracy. More than one of the Danish kings made attempts to subjugate and Christianize them, generally unsuccessful, though in 1219 Waldemar II founded the town of Reval, now known as Tallinn. About the middle of the thirteenth century the ruling Danish sovereign gave up the conquest of Estonia as a bad job and sold his interests to the Knights of the Sword. These German crusaders set about the task of subjugating the country in thoroughgoing Teutonic fashion, ostensibly for the purpose of introducing Christianity among its pagan inhabitants, justifying their name by effecting wholesale conversions at the point of the sword. From that time onward for nearly six

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hundred years the Estonians were reduced to a state of serfdom to the German nobles—the Balts, or Baltic barons, as they were called—in whose hands the land remained even after Estonia came under the rule of Russia in Peter the Great's time. Alexander I abolished serfdom, but the condition of the peasants was so little improved that they rose in revolt in 1859. Though the last quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed a marked improvement in their economic condition, a determined attempt was made by the Russian Government to Russify the inhabitants of the province, Estonians and Germans alike, by the employment of harsh and repressive measures.

Early in the present century the Estonians, like the other small peoples on Russia's borders, began working for autonomy, and when the Russian provisional government of Kerensky fell in 1917, Estonia took advantage of the general confusion to declare its independence. Its position was rendered desperate, however, by the fact that during the next three years it was invaded and laid waste both by the Germans and the Bolsheviki, being plundered ruthlessly and systematically stripped of arms. Thus a state had to be created without money, a war waged without weapons. Yet the grim determination of the Estonians to retain their independence resisted the terrific strain. General Laidoner organized an army, and a naval officer, Captain Pitka, created a force of shock-troops from volunteers, transform-



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ing railway trucks into armored trains. Men and money poured in from Estonia's sister-nation, Finland, and later Sweden and Denmark contributed some hundreds of volunteers. On New Year's day of 1919 the Bolsheviks held half of Estonia in their grasp, yet within a month their offensive had been shattered and the whole country cleared of the invading Reds. In February, 1920, peace was declared between Russia and Estonia, this being the first treaty concluded by the Soviet Government with any of the border states.

The problem of reconstruction with which Estonia was now confronted was enough to try the soul of a far larger and richer state. The country had been laid waste, its farmsteads burned, and its industries almost totally destroyed. Moreover, although Estonia was soviet Russia's first "window into Europe," neither Russian trade nor transit reached the height attained before the war. But in spite of these initial difficulties, which were aggravated by an unwise credit system, Estonia has succeeded in balancing its budget and is meeting with a remarkable measure of success in the stern task of economic reconstruction.

Like all the post-war states, Estonia was compelled, upon gaining its independence, to build a government from the ground up. It possessed few trained officials; it had no experience whatsoever in financial matters or foreign affairs. But the Estonians have a passion for education—less than 5



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per cent. of the population is illiterate—and an adequate supply of educated men was available in the graduates of the great university which Gustavus Adolphus established at Dorpat four years before John Harvard founded at Cambridge the institution which bears his name. That these untried officials—most of them lawyers, teachers, doctors—should make many mistakes was to be expected; that they have not made far more is astonishing.

The University of Dorpat is attended by nearly five thousand students, more than a quarter of whom are women. Its faculty, curricula, and equipment compare favorably with those of any institution for higher education in Europe, but the students are handicapped in after-life by the fact that instruction is given in Estonian, a language almost unknown outside of Estonia itself. As the republic has only about 1,100,000 inhabitants, it is obvious that the supply of university-trained men and women will soon exceed the demand.

From the outset Estonian diplomacy has aimed at strengthening the bonds which bind Estonia to her Baltic neighbors—Finland on one side, Latvia and Lithuania on the other. With the aim of drawing these countries closer together, arrangements have already been made for the elimination of passport visas, unified tariffs, and the duty-free transit of goods, these being the first steps toward a Baltic confederation. Certain of the European powers, as I remarked a little way back, do not look with favor



LOADING THE CAR AT TALLINN

No moment in all the varied hours of our journey across Europe was fraught with such anxiety as that perilous portion of time when we beheld our one and only car swaying between the deck of the steamer and the quayside



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on a Baltic pact, particularly were it to include Germany and Russia, and sought to restrain Estonia by withholding their approval when she applied to the League of Nations for a much-needed loan. But the sturdy inhabitants of these Baltic lands are not so easily coerced as the peoples of the Balkans, and the Estonian Government is fully aware that the country's safety and prosperity are to be found in some form of union.

Estonia is not on as friendly terms with Russia as is Latvia, Communist intrigue having produced constant and dangerous friction. Juntas of Estonian Communists have been established in Russia, where they operate under the ægis of the Soviet Government and of the Third International, their secret agents in Estonia being under Russian diplomatic protection. Though these agents are known to be plotting against the country's domestic peace, the Estonian Government finds it exceedingly difficult to deal with them, for, when they are arrested, Estonians living in Russia are promptly imprisoned, the Bolshevik Government then offering to exchange these hostages for the Communists held in Estonian prisons. When, as has happened on several occasions, the Estonians have executed these conspirators, the Bolsheviks have retaliated by putting a like number of Estonian hostages to death. As the result of an attempt made by the Communists in 1924 to seize Tallinn, which was foiled only after considerable blood had been shed and numerous buildings had

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been burned, the authorities have taken vigorous measures to combat the Red peril by making communism a crime against the state and treating its adherents as criminals. In order to check the constant infiltration of Bolshevik emissaries, a force of civil guards has been organized on the model of those in Finland, the towns of Estonia being guarded and her eastern frontier patrolled by thirty thousand of these Baltic minute men.

Tallinn—it was called Reval in Russian times—is a most fascinating old town and would be crowded with tourists during the summer months were it more accessible and better known. It has seen a long procession of sovereignties, from its citadel having floated in turn the standards of the Danes, the Livonian knights, the Hanseatic League, the Teutonic knights, the Swedes, and the Russians, each having left on the city's architecture a more or less deep impression. Its places of worship are of great antiquity, beauty, and interest. The oldest is the Dom church, built at the beginning of the thirteenth century; in the following century were erected the churches of St. Nicholas, St. Olai, and the Holy Ghost. The Town Hall, dating from 1320 or perhaps earlier, contains some gorgeous stained-glass windows and some interesting wood-carvings black as ebony from age; on special occasions the walls of the council chamber are hung with a superb set of Flemish tapestries. One of the old houses fronting on the municipal square contains a pharmacy which



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was founded in 1422, just half a century before Columbus discovered the New World, which makes some of the long-established commercial houses of western Europe seem modern in comparison. The lofty wall which still encircles the lower town, built by the Danes and strengthened by the Knights of the Sword, is broken at intervals by massive towers, twenty-four in all, most of them in excellent preservation. Indeed, I know of no other European city of anywhere near the same size which has so many antiquities to show the visitor as the capital of Estonia.

Perched on a precipitous crag above the city is the Dom, whose walls inclose a thirteenth century fortress-castle, now the seat of government; the Estonian White House, the official residence of the president-premier of the republic, who is known as the Riigiwanem, or head of the state; and an imposing Russian cathedral with five bulbous gilded domes. The terraces which have been laid out upon the ramparts of the Dom command entrancing views of the sea, the harbor, and the lower town. From here one looks directly down upon a bewildering maze of narrow, winding streets and high-gabled Old World houses, the white plaster which has been lavishly used to strengthen the angles of the red-tiled roofs producing the effect of a winter landscape even in midsummer.

The center of fashionable life in Tallinn is the Estonian Club, a large and luxuriously furnished

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establishment much frequented by the high officers of the army and government officials. In czarist days it was a favorite rendezvous of the local nobility, the Baltic barons, but against these popular feeling is so strong that they have been forced to withdraw from the city's social life, being virtually ostracized by the Estonians. Though they form the most highly cultured class in the community, they have become so unpopular that a foreign diplomat stationed in Tallinn told me that it was as much as his place was worth to be seen associating with them.

Outside the hotels, which are comfortable but unpretentious, there are few restaurants in Tallinn, but tucked away in the old town are several small places patronized by those who like Russian cooking. Here one can obtain that rarest of all northern delicacies, fresh Beluga caviare. Here, also, I was introduced to that curious Russian institution known as the "yard of vodka." At the boisterous parties which serve to break the terrible tedium of the long winter nights in these northern lands, when darkness sets in by the middle of the afternoon, each guest finds ranged before his place a caravan of tiny glasses filled with the fiery white spirit beloved by the Muscovite—literally a yard of them. Imagine any one ordering a yard of our own national drink, synthetic gin!

Though we arrived in Estonia by road, we left it by air, shipping the car to Helsingfors by boat and ourselves making the trip by airplane. A Swedish





THE MOST NORTHERN CAPITAL OF EUROPE

Though Finland has less than 3,000 miles of railway, the station in Helsingfors would do credit to any city in the world

## BARRIERS AGAINST BOLSHEVISM

company, which is, I believe, a subsidiary of the Deutsche Lufthansa, maintains a daily service between Tallinn and Helsingfors and between Helsingfors and Stockholm, with large all-metal Junker monoplanes. The flight across the Gulf of Finland requires only three quarters of an hour, the body of water which separates the Estonian and Finnish capitals being so narrow that on a clear day, from a height of a few thousand feet, both cities are visible at the same time. The immense saving in time afforded by aërial travel was illustrated when, thirty minutes after starting from Tallinn, we saw below us, "a painted ship upon a painted ocean," the little steamer bearing our car, which had left Tallinn four hours before we did and which did not dock at Helsingfors until three hours after our arrival.

As the plane, its metal wings and fuselage gleaming like burnished silver in the summer sunshine, mounted into the cloudless blue, a superb panorama spread itself below us like a map in bas-belief—the red roofs and slender church spires of Tallinn; the sandy beaches and limestone cliffs of the Estonian coast; the archipelago of coastal islands, checkered in green and yellow by lush pastures and fields of ripening grain; and, away to the northward, where sea and sky seemed to meet, the dark line which I knew for the forests of Finland.

The young Swedish officer who was our only fellow-passenger tapped me on the shoulder and pointed toward the east, where Leningrad lies. A



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row of sooty smoke-tails, a dozen of them, regularly spaced, smeared the blue-and-silver surface of the gulf.

"The Bolshevik destroyers at battle practice," he shouted in my ear.

I nodded and glanced over my shoulder toward Tallinn, rapidly growing dimmer in the distance. I could still descry the standard of the young Estonian republic fluttering valiantly, defiantly, over the heights of the Dom.

Helsinki—better known to foreigners as Helsingfors—is not only the world's most northern capital but its name has a half-barbaric ring, so my wife and daughter were frankly surprised and, I suspect, a trifle disappointed when the plane swooped down upon as up-to-the-minute a city as there is in Europe. Even I, who had been there before, when it was the capital of a Russian grand duchy, was amazed at the signs of growth and progress.

The car of Mr. Pearson, the American minister, the Stars and Stripes fluttering from its hood, was awaiting us at the airport, and we were whirled to our hotel through a series of impressively broad avenues, lined by lofty modern buildings and crowded with motor traffic. A doorman in an impressive uniform of blue and gold, who I learned afterward was a Russian prince, helped us to alight; a Russian baron assigned us our rooms, and a lad in buttons, who may have been a grand duke for all I know, shot us upward in the elevator. From our

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windows we looked out upon a scene which might have been in some bustling city of our own West instead of within six degrees of the Arctic Circle, for on the opposite side of a broad asphalted plaza, across which red taxicabs darted at headlong speed, rose the imposing façade of the Helsingfors railway station, an enormous structure whose lofty tower recalls the San Francisco ferry building. Though Finland has less than three thousand miles of railways, the terminal in Helsinki would do credit to any city in the United States.

When we went down-stairs to lunch I ordered cocktails. After some delay the waiter placed a teapot and tea-cups upon the table.

"What's this?" I demanded. "We didn't order tea."

"S-s-sh, sir," he whispered warningly, glancing over his shoulder to make certain that he was not overheard. "These are your cocktails. We always serve them this way since Finland went dry. It's no good taking chances, sir, with these prohibition officers hanging around."

That was my first intimation that the use of alcohol was prohibited in Finland. It was, as my daughter remarked, just like being home. Later in the afternoon a mysterious individual rapped at my door; he said that he had been "sent by a friend." How familiar that sounded! Though it was a hot day, he wore a light overcoat, the pockets of which bulged suspiciously.

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"How much are you asking for it?" I inquired without further preliminaries.

"Five hundred marks a bottle," he said, "and cheap at the price."

Offhand that sounded like a good deal of money for a bottle of Scotch, but a little rapid figuring revealed the fact that it was only about five dollars in Volstead currency. Though in theory Finland is as dry as the sands of the Nefud, in practice liquor is considerably cheaper there than it is in Sweden, where it is sold at government stores, the purchaser being required to exhibit a government permit.

Until the overthrow of the czarist régime in 1917, Suomi, as the Finns call their country, was a grand duchy governed subject to its own constitution by the Emperor of Russia as Grand Duke of Finland. Though Finland had always enjoyed a very large measure of autonomy, being virtually independent of Russia save in military and foreign affairs, the Social Democrats, who were and still are very powerful in Finnish politics, regarded everything Russian with suspicion and dislike, but with the establishment of a democratic government in Russia their attitude toward that country underwent an abrupt change. The propertied classes in Finland, however, which had always been orientated toward Sweden, now became seriously alarmed, fearing that the Social Democrats would indorse the principles of bolshevism. As the chaos brought on by bolshevism increased, the breach between the political factions





AUF WIEDERSEHEN!

Colonel and Mrs. Powell and their daughter embarking in a Junker plane  
at Tallinn for Finland and Sweden



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in Finland widened. The pro-Russian sympathies of the Social Democrats became more pronounced, while the propertied classes sought to cut completely adrift from a Russia which had no settled government and showed no signs of having one. Accordingly, on December 6, 1917, the Diet, then controlled by the bourgeois element, drew up a declaration of independence, which is held to mark the birth of Finnish freedom.

Despite the fact that by the treaty of Brest-Litovsk the Bolsheviki formally recognized Finland's independence, they were determined to establish a soviet form of government in that country. With that end in view their emissaries organized a Finnish Red guard, which proceeded to terrorize the bourgeois element of the population. To oppose the trend toward bolshevism and to reestablish order, a former Russia cavalry general, Baron Mannerheim, organized the White army. As this did not prove strong enough to maintain order, foreign intervention was sought. The allies had their hands full without bothering about the troubles of the Finns; Sweden likewise refused her help; but the Germans did not hesitate. Though hard pressed on the western front, they sent a division under General Count von der Goltz to Finland. These reinforcements, landing in the rear of the Red army, enabled Baron Mannerheim to win crushing victories at Tammerfors and Viborg, the remnants of the Red army being driven across the Russian border. In retaliation for

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the excesses committed by the Reds, the Whites instituted a counter-terror, some fifteen thousand Bolshevik sympathizers being slaughtered.

Gratitude for their deliverance from the Reds caused a wave of pro-German feeling among the Finns, and the crown of Finland was offered to the Kaiser's brother-in-law, Prince Frederick Charles of Hesse, who accepted it, but in consequence of the German débâcle he did not ascend the throne. America's entry into the war, the allied victories, and the arrogant attitude which the Germans adopted toward the Finns had a powerful effect on public opinion, and the signing of the armistice in 1918 found Finland definitely turned toward the allies. On June 17, 1919, largely as a result of pressure exerted by the Agrarian party, composed of small landowners hostile to the Swedish-speaking monarchistic faction, the Finnish Diet proclaimed the country a republic and adopted a new constitution.

Since then, despite a serious dispute with soviet Russia over the sovereignty of Karelia, which was decided by the Red battalions in favor of Russia; and a less serious controversy with Sweden over the Aaland islands, which was decided by the League of Nations in favor of Finland, the path of the young republic has been on the whole a peaceful and prosperous one.

Adjustments made necessary by the end of the war were being achieved with amazing rapidity. The improved conditions of production and trade formed

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a firm basis for financial reorganization, and in 1925 the Finnish mark, which had declined alarmingly, was placed on a gold basis, being stabilized at approximately forty to the dollar. No nation in Europe, perhaps, has made such strides in social legislation as Finland, the Diet having enacted measures providing for an eight-hour day, the total prohibition of alcohol, complete religious liberty, votes for women, social insurance, workmen's compensation, and land reform, the last-named law enabling tenants to purchase their holdings at a price below their value in the open market, a large number of tenants having thus been turned into small proprietors.

The coöperative movement has made extraordinary progress in Finland, not only among the agricultural producers but among certain classes of consumers as well. The interests of the consumers are looked after by the great organization known as the "K.K.", an abbreviation for Kulutusosuuskuntien Keskusliitto. The K.K., with its subsidiary societies, covers an enormously wide field, its activities being amazingly diversified. For the purpose of carrying on coöperative propaganda and education it maintains a staff of field lecturers and demonstrators, who are provided with radio and motion-picture outfits; organizes rural festivals and meetings; runs a school and a correspondence institute; and even has a training course for children. It has a legal section and a building department, the latter furnishing the

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members with plans for houses, stores, and farm buildings; it publishes newspapers, books, and pamphlets and has its own printing office and bindery. O.T.K., a subsidiary of K.K., carries on a business in groceries, manufactured articles, hardware, and fancy goods through the stores and warehouses which it maintains in nearly every important town in Finland. It operates suit and shirt factories in Helsinki, a rye-flour mill at Jaaski, and several herring curing-houses on the Gulf of Bothnia, and, in order to foil the match trust's threatened conquest of the Finnish market, it has established a match factory of its own. Through other subsidiaries of the parent organization the coöperators may obtain life-, accident-, funeral-, and fire-insurance on very advantageous terms. The strength of the consumers' coöperative movement may be gaged when it is mentioned that the K.K. and the S.O.K. have a total membership of nearly 400,000, one out of every nine inhabitants of Finland belonging to one or the other of these organizations.

Owing to its lack of railways, Finland has devoted much time and money to the development of its highway system, but motoring is hazardous because of the narrowness of the roads and the numerous hidden turns. If one is content to drive at moderate speed, however, motoring in southern Finland is delightful, for the roads are generally smooth and the scenery is enchanting—an endless panorama of quaint villages and picturesque farmsteads, of



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primeval forests, lush green meadows, crystal lakes, and tumbling streams. These, with the neat wooden houses and well-kept farms, constantly reminded me of the northern districts of Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

The visitor who is pressed for time can obtain an excellent idea of the beauties and resources of interior Finland by availing himself of the tours arranged by the Finnish Tourist Association, which are astonishingly cheap. The most comprehensive of these tours provides for a night journey by sleeping-car from Helsinki to Viborg, a picturesque old town, with some fine examples of thirteenth century architecture, near the Russian border. Another two hours by train brings the traveler to the famous rapids of Imatra, which have a greater volume of water than any other cataract in Europe. From Vuoksenniska, the port of Imatra, comfortable passenger steamers ply across the large, island-studded Lake Saimaa to Savonlinna, a fascinating little town which nestles at the foot of a castle built in 1475 to guard the eastern marches against the aggressions of the Muscovites. From Savonlinna the steamer continues through a series of lakes, rivers, and canals, the scenery reminiscent of the Thousand Islands, to Kuopio, one of the most important towns in the interior of Finland, at the back of which rises the lofty Puijo Hill. Thence across Lake Oulu, one of the largest bodies of water in northern Finland, to Vaala, where the most picturesque and thrilling part of the tour begins:



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shooting the rapids of the Oulu River. The boats employed for the purpose are long slender affairs, modeled on the lines of the craft used by the woodsmen of the eastern forests to carry their pitch and resin down to the sea. The trip, which is distinctly exciting and in places somewhat perilous, occupies about eight hours, five of which are spent in shooting the rapids. Oulu—or Uleaborg, as it was formerly called—a port of considerable importance near the head of the Gulf of Bothnia, is reached the same evening, in time to connect with the night train for Helsinki. The entire tour may be made in seven days for a total cost of forty dollars, including railway and steamer fares, sleeping-car berths, food, and lodging. That is what I call cheap traveling.

For those who have more time at their disposal, and who are willing to put up with a certain amount of discomfort in order to visit regions which few travelers have seen, I can recommend the journey across Lapland and the Pechenga territory, recently acquired by Finland, to the shores of the Arctic Ocean. The traveler who boards the mail train which leaves Helsinki about ten o'clock in the morning can alight from his sleeping-car thirty hours later at Rovaniemi, a Lapp settlement only a few seconds below the Arctic Circle. Rovaniemi is the end-of-steel, the journey from there to Pitkajarvi, a distance of nearly three hundred miles, being made by the motor-stages of the Finnish Post-Office in two days. During the summer months the Finnish Tour-

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ist Association also operates a tri-weekly motor service and maintains rude but not uncomfortable guest-houses where travelers may eat and sleep. From Pitkajarvi the journey is continued by motor-boat down-river to Kolttongas, whence a small steamer plies twice weekly to Petsamo, a Lapp fishing village and trading post in Lat. 70° N., on the shores of Barents Sea. The trip from Helsinki to Petsamo and return can be made in about fifteen days at a cost of about fifty dollars, including meals and lodging. It is a rather monotonous journey, and distinctly fatiguing, but it enables the traveler to see the vast tundras of the North, the curious villages of the Lapps, their great herds of reindeer, and to gain an insight into the lives of those strange half-savage peoples who dwell in darkness during half the year along the fringes of the icy ocean.

Originally nomadic hunters and fishermen, all the Finnic people save the Lapps have long since yielded to the influence of civilization, and now everywhere lead settled lives as traders, farmers, and herdsmen. The Finns have a high standard of morality, are hospitable, faithful, and upright in their business dealings. Like most of the peoples of northern Europe they have a highly developed national consciousness, an ingrained love of independence, and a passion for education. On the other hand, they are stolid, frequently stubborn, inclined to indolence, revengeful, and not at all averse to settling their disputes by fighting.

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Every man, whatever his age or station, wears at his waist a small, razor-sharp sheath-knife with a blade about five inches long. With these vicious little weapons they settle their personal quarrels, frequently with fatal consequences. The length of blade used by the combatants is determined by the seriousness of the quarrel. When a controversy has reached a point where it can be settled only by a duel, the challenger says to his adversary, "Well, how much do you want—a quarter, a half, or the whole knife?" If the challenged party decides that a quarter will satisfy him, handkerchiefs are wound tightly around the upper three fourths of the blades, leaving only an inch or so exposed, in which case death seldom results, though both men usually require medical attendance. Should they agree to use the whole blade, however, the duel generally ends in "one more case for the undertaker, another little job for the casket-maker."

Though the Finns have a wholesome distrust of the Russians, they are not in the least afraid of them. The prime minister of Finland told me, and I imagine that his assertion is quite true, that the Russian mentality is understood by the Finns better than by any other people. From my conversations with the premier and other officials I gathered that the Finnish Government does not anticipate any aggressions on the part of the soviets, but the country had a taste of bolshevism in 1918 and it is taking no chances of having that experience repeated, as de-



Summer in the fjords and



Winter in the forests of Finland

UNDER THE ARCTIC CIRCLE





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noted by the fact that, though a small country in point of population, it maintains a force of civic guards, known as the "Skyddskorps," numbering 100,000 men, as an insurance against Bolshevik activities.

The Finns are a hard-headed, unemotional people who never permit sentimentality to interfere with the dictates of common sense. This characteristic was amusingly illustrated by a little incident which occurred at a banquet held not long ago in Helsinki. An eminent Finnish educator—I believe that he is the president of one of the universities—was scheduled to deliver an address on "Finland's Love of Peace." When the dignified old gentleman rose to speak he carelessly threw back his long frock-coat, thereby unconsciously revealing the businesslike sheath-knife which dangled from his suspender-button. When one of the audience ventured to call his attention to the inconsistency of an avowed pacifist carrying a lethal weapon, the speaker promptly retorted:

"It is not at all inconsistent. I am not seeking a quarrel with any one, but I insist on being able to defend myself if some one attacks me."

There you have, very neatly summed up, the attitude of all the nations, from the Balkans to the Baltic, who face each other across embattled borders.



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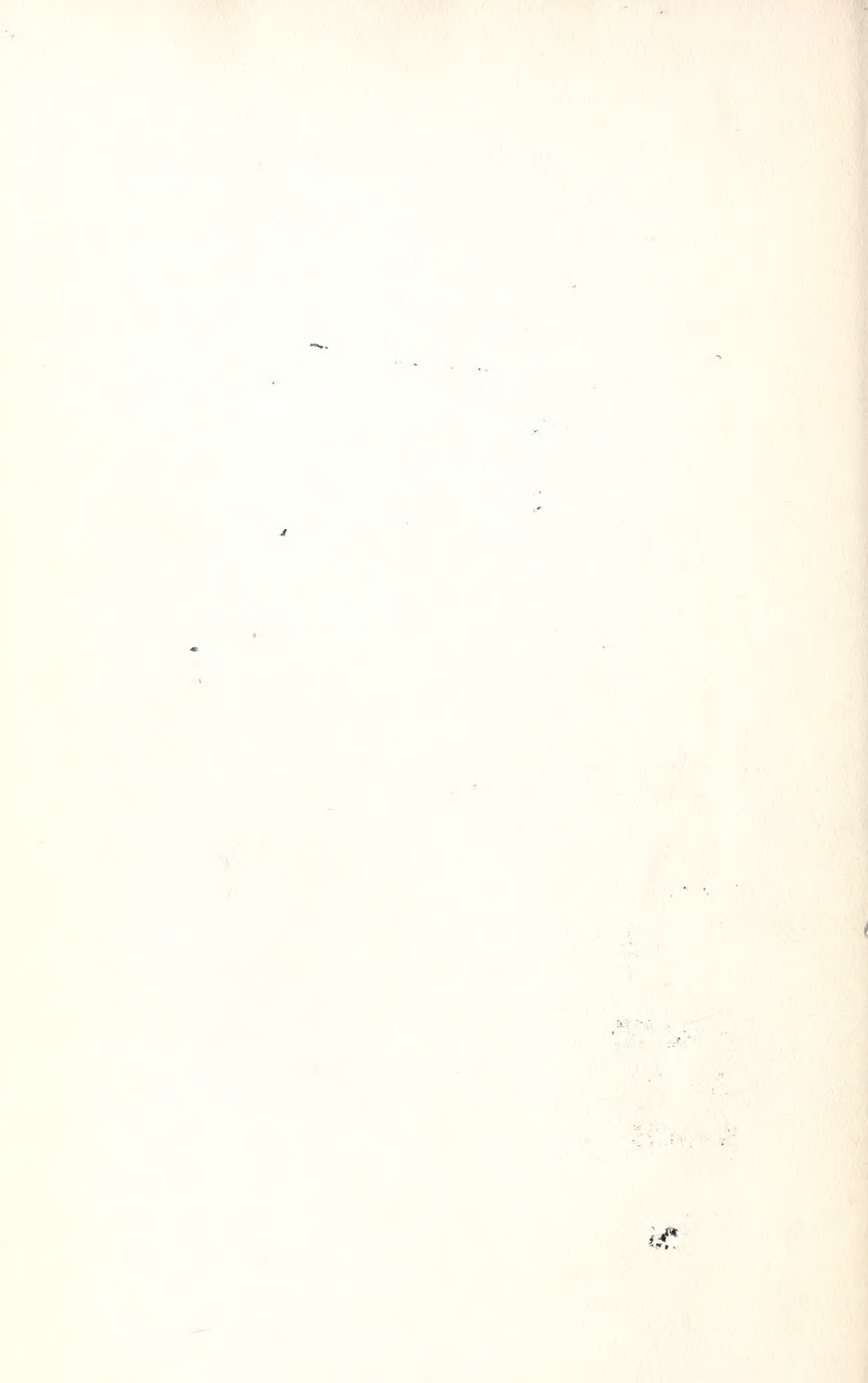
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